

# Desert

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER, 1969

50c

**DEATH VALLEY ISSUE**  
**15 Back Country Trips**



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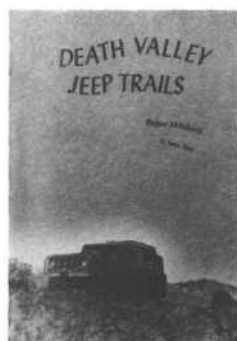
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By ROGER MITCHELL

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WILLIAM KNYVETT, PUBLISHER

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**Desert**  
MAGAZINE

Volume 32, Number 11 NOVEMBER, 1969

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EDITORIAL AND CIRCULATION OFFICES: 74-109 Larrea, Palm Desert, California 92260, AC 714 346-8144. NATIONAL ADVERTISING OFFICES: 8380 Melrose Street, Los Angeles 90069, AC 213 653-5847. Listed in Standard Rate and Data. Subscription rates: United States, Canada & Mexico, 1 year, \$5.00; 2 years, \$9.50, 3 years, \$13.00. Other foreign subscribers add \$1.00 currency for each year. See Subscription Order Form in this issue. Allow five weeks for change of address and send both new and old addresses with zip codes. Desert Magazine is published monthly. Second class postage paid at Palm Desert, California and at additional mailing offices under Act of March 3, 1879. Contents copyrighted 1969 by Desert Magazine and permission to reproduce any or all contents must be secured in writing. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs WILL NOT BE RETURNED unless accompanied by a self-addressed and stamped envelope.



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## A Peek in the Publisher's Poke

case of give an inch and take a mile. Seriously, girls, let's pitch in and make this into one of the most interesting and informative pages of its kind.

This November issue is basically a Death Valley edition to commemorate the historic events of yesteryear. Last year we did a photographic essay on Death Valley and this year we take you behind the scenes with a special article by Roger Mitchell, long-time Death Valley explorer and author of the popular book, *Death Valley Jeep Trails*. Check pages 2 and 6 for additional books about Death Valley. For those who want to stay on the paved roads, Helen Walker takes you through the valley in an interesting geological tour dating back some 2 billion years and bringing you up to the present. From the cover of the legendary Walter Scott's beloved castle to Allen Remington's account of a four-legged camp bandit in Darwin Falls, we feel there should be something of interest for everyone.

The Valley will be the scene of the 20th Death Valley National Encampment which originated in 1949 when a group of civic and business leaders and persons interested in commemorating the history of the valley formed the Death Valley '49ers and met in the valley to celebrate the heroic efforts of the pioneers in 1849. Since then the gathering has become larger each year with attendance reaching thousands. The sole income of the non-profit organization is the sale of memberships and publications and from donations. Single membership is \$3.00, family membership \$5.00, and a Life Membership \$100.00. Memberships may be obtained by writing to the Death Valley '49ers, Death Valley, California 92328 or if you plan on attending the Encampment memberships can be purchased at Information Booths or from '49er Directors who will be attending all events.

One of the key things to remember when attending the Encampment, being held this year from November 6 through 9, is to make reservations early. Overnight camping can be real fun but be sure to bring your own firewood as it is *available at stores only* and keep in mind that the nights can get chilly so take ample bedding and clothing. Folding chairs or camp stools are handy for attending the various activities that have become so much a part of the Encampment. (See page 22 for a resumé of the program). There are several locations in the valley where meals are available and groceries, dairy products and meats are obtainable at Furnace Creek Store and Stove Pipe Wells Village. So why not join the fun of the Encampment and plan to live it up under the stars in one of America's most unique valleys. I'll guarantee you one thing: When the first rays of light strike the silent valley floor you'll want to rewrite a lyric that Al Jolson made famous in footlights many years ago, "*Nothing could be finer than to be a '49er in the morning!*"

*William H. Hays*





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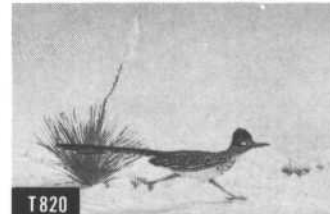
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## Book Reviews

by Jack Pepper

### TRAVEL GUIDE TO ARIZONA

*By the Editors of Sunset Books*

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New maps, photographs and descriptive material provide travel data on the Grand Canyon, Navajo-Hopi Indian country, Southwestern Arizona, all of the state's many lakes and rivers and the main cities.

Like California, Arizona is divided into two sections; the northern part where there are mountains and forests, and the southern section with its deserts, mesas and arroyos where Spanish explorers sought the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola.

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### DEATH VALLEY U.S.A.

*By Kenneth Alexander*

Many years ago Death Valley was a remote, lonely, magnificently beautiful area. It was a vast wasteland that sheltered Indians, that became a haven for daring adventurers who sought and found the white man's precious gold, and that sometimes brought death to those who tried to survive in the blazing heat.

Today Death Valley is a national monument commemorating the foolhardy, the courageous, the knaves and scoundrels who once made it, for a brief period, an exciting, dangerously glamorous gold rush center.

An excellent photographer and writer who has spent most of his life exploring the area and researching Death Valley, Kenneth Alexander has written a fascinating history of this great American phenomenon.

The author separates fact from fiction as he describes the ill-fated Jayhawker party and their days of despair in the burning valley as they waited for rescue. They were finally rescued by two heroic men, William Manly and John Rogers, who walked out of the valley and brought back food and water to their party.

The author tells of the discovery of borax and Marion "Borax" Smith who played such an important role in the development of both Death Valley and California. Included in this episode is the history of Aaron and Rosie Winters, whose discovery of borax is a story of "rags to riches."

Other interesting pioneers brought alive in the book are Jean Lemoigne, the reclusive silver miner who survived years in the Valley, only to perish on the first lap of his journey to return to his native France. Others include Shorty Harris, the rugged prospector, and Bill Parkinson, mule team driver.

And no book on Death Valley would be complete without the fabulous and controversial story of Death Valley Scot-

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ty. "What manner of man was this Walter Scott, eccentric, Death Valley Midas, charlatan, promoter, lunatic, publicity hound, cheat or fool?"

The author, who has personally listened to many of the stories told by Scotty before the latter's death in 1954, gives an intimate insight into Scotty's personality and history.

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In his book, *Death Valley U.S.A.*, the author presents this mosaic in both literature and photography. Large 9 x 11 format, hardcover, quality paper, profusely illustrated, \$8.50.

#### GUIDE FOR INSULATOR COLLECTORS, Volume Three

By John C. Tibbitts

Volume Three of *A Guide For Insulator Collectors* not only has sketches and descriptions of dozens of rare insulators not covered in the two previous volumes, it also has a revised price guide and index to insulators in all three volumes.

The first two volumes were reviewed in our July '69 issue. To our knowledge,

these are the only books published dealing strictly with the collection of insulators.

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By Francis P. Farquharn

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1. Date of filing: September 15, 1969.
2. Title of publication: DESERT Magazine.
3. Frequency of issue: Monthly.
4. Location of known office of publication: Palm Desert, Calif. 92260.
5. Location of the headquarters or general business offices of the publishers: Palm Desert, California 92260.
6. Names and addresses of publisher and editor: Publisher: William Knyvett, 79-890 Horse-shoe Rd., Indio, California 92201.  
Editor: Jack Pepper, 73-170 Tumbleweed Lane, Palm Desert, California 92260.
7. Owners: Jack Pepper and William and Joyce Knyvett.
8. Bondholders, mortgagors, security holders: None.
9. Re No. 8: None.
10. Average over 12 month period of issues from November 1968 to October 1969: 44,500 copies printed; paid circulation: 21,000 news-stands, 23,000 mail subscriptions, 44,000 total paid. 300 free distribution, 44,300 total distribution, 200 office use, spoiled, etc.



#### DEATH VALLEY U.S.A.

By Kenneth Alexander

Kenneth Alexander has explored Death Valley, photographed it, and studied its history and legends. In this book the author brings to the reader a wealth of knowledge about this great American phenomenon so that others too may find the excitement, mystery, and adventure that he found. With dozens of outstanding photographs which display the spectacular scenery of the Valley, and in stories about this magnificent land, the author captures a view of America's past that is "with great rapidity disappearing."

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# Monorail to Oblivion

by Helen McInnes



**F**AR DOWN on the southwestern side of Death Valley in the hilly area around the Wingate Wash there is a huge deposit of Epsom salts, a glittering field of white forming a perfect contrast with the soft colors of the surrounding hills.

Years ago a man prospected the area, and in view of the high quality and vast amount of salts in sight, he believed that a full-scale mining operation would probably prove to be a profitable enterprise. Epsom salts was an important and well established product so he had no trouble in getting together a group of men who were interested, and willing to invest money in the venture.

The men formed a company and plans were made to begin the project. They acquired a small plant at Wilmington, California to refine and prepare the salts for market. A dozen or so men were hired and taken to the mine site to begin the initial development work.

A camp, consisting mostly of tents and jokingly called Epsom City was set up a short distance from the salt field. The mining materials and supplies for the

workers were trucked in from Randsburg, 60 miles southwest.

The road between Epsom City and Randsburg was rough, and in some places it was almost impassable; the trucks of that era were not what they are today and the company was faced with constant trouble along their supply route. They knew they would have to find another method of transportation before any actual shipping of the salt could begin.

A railroad was the obvious solution to the rough roads and balky trucks, and would also be fairly economical to construct and maintain. They could build a line east and connect with the Tonopah & Tidewater tracks at a point near Tecopa, or they could build west and connect with the Trona Railroad at a point somewhere around Searles Lake.

The western route would have to cross over two high mountain ranges and would require a good deal of labor, while an eastern route, though longer, would cross over relatively flat country and could be built with a minimum of labor.

Finally they chose the shorter one to Trona, and decided that instead of build-



*The monorail was used to carry lumber and material for the uncompleted line. Later these lumber carriers were changed to ore buckets that held 2½ tons of Epsom salts on each side of the rail. Opposite page: The monorail during construction as it snaked its way through Layton Canyon.*

ing a standard type railway they would construct an elevated monorail. Thus eliminating the many problems of crossing over the mountains with a standard two-track line.

Surveys were made and the rail bed started. It began at a point a few miles south of Trona, called Magnesium Siding, crossed the south end of Searles Lake and up Layton Canyon over the summit of the Slate Range. Down through a steep narrow canyon into the Panamint Valley, and across the south end of the valley floor, up the slopes of the Wingate Wash and over the summit at Wingate Pass and

*Continued on Page 35*



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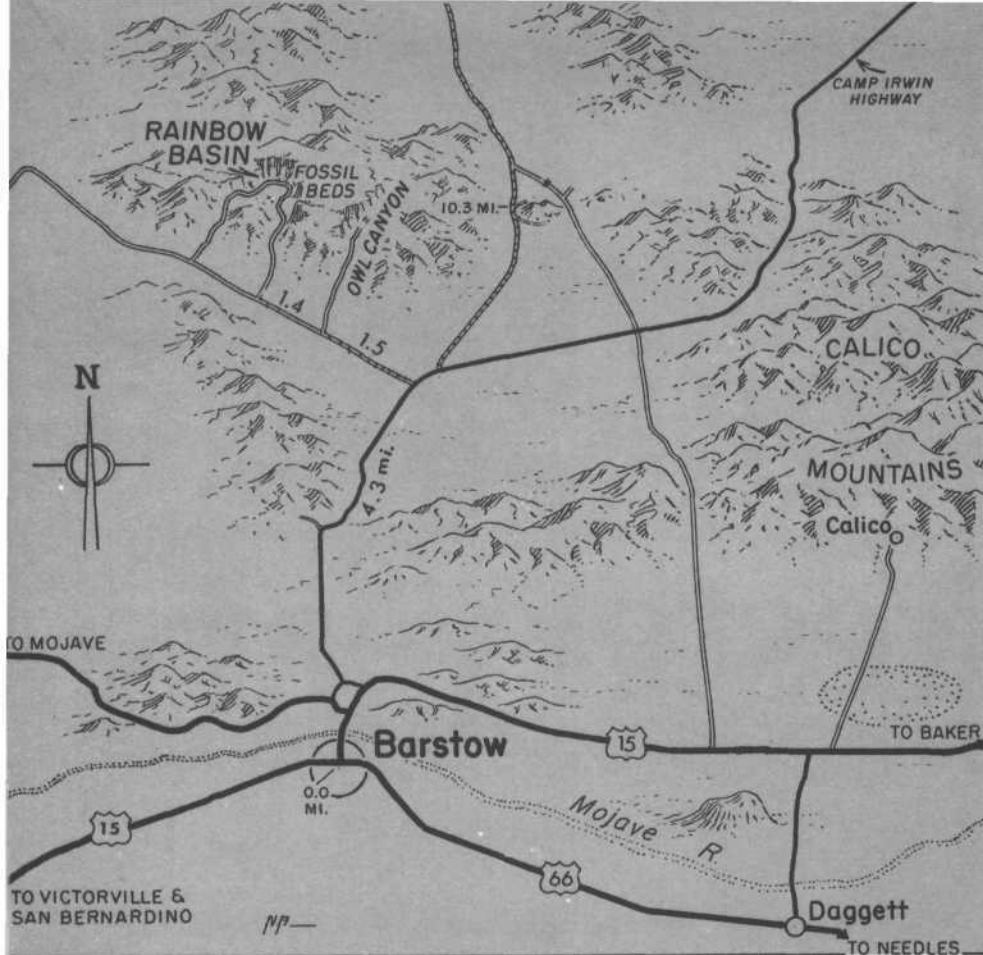
# A TRIP To RAINBOW

**T**HIS is one of those stories that could easily begin with "Once upon a time." It started 50 million years ago when Mother Nature got mad and started heaving the earth; flat land became jagged peaks; horizontal-geological formations became vertical and tons of dirt shifted position.

Then, perhaps in way of apology, she sprinkled the area with a splash of color and put the elements to work that turned the havoc into a beautiful recreational area. What work she failed to complete was added in June of 1968—the U.S. Bureau of Land Management built a campground.

The area is known to many as the Barstow Fossil Beds, but the Bureau of Land Management changed this to Rainbow Basin. Either name is appropriate. Fossils of prehistoric rhinoceros, camel, and horse have been found in abundance. There are also fossils of numerous insects, some of which have been extinct for millions of years.





*Opposite page: Driving through Rainbow Canyon on the way to the campsites in Owl Canyon and Rainbow Basin. Above: The author's wife and Evelyn Mott dig for fossils.*

# BASIN

by Al Pearce

The entire area is a maze of color. Anywhere you look, the jagged peaks and confused geological formations are brightened by nearly every color of the spectrum. There are pinks and greens, reds and oranges, enough to almost resemble an artist's pallet.

The campground is in Owl Canyon and Rainbow Basin. Take the paved Fort Irwin Road north from Barstow which intersects State 58. Approximately five miles north of State 58, turn left on the graded Fossil Bed Road and proceed several miles to a sign which designates the campground. Turn right here and travel over the graded dirt road. It is accessible by passenger car, although drive slowly if you have a low-center vehicle.

The dirt road, seemingly in the middle of nowhere, suddenly turns onto pavement. The pavement winds between towering canyon walls, over which redtail hawks can usually be seen hunting.

There are 32 campsites — many of which had not been used at the time of

this writing. The caretaker complained that nobody ever came here. Some of the campsites have covered tables. The campground was built as a part of the current Bureau of Land Management program which calls for the construction of camping sites throughout the nation. Others will soon be developed in Afton Canyon and near several dry lakes in Southern California.

From the campground, a road carries the visitor through the heart of Rainbow Basin. Here, the colors that are visible from miles away become truly impressive. Even more so is the view from on top of several of the towering peaks. Climbing is difficult because of loose earth and rock, but the effort is well rewarded by spectacular views that seem to reach endlessly across the Mojave Desert.

Rainbow Basin is just a short drive from the famous, colorful Calico Mountains, which at one time was noted for its output of silver; but, now, better known for having produced the ghost

town of Calico. This ghost town has been almost completely restored and has become a popular tourist center where the history of a past era slowly unfolds.

Also from the mountain peaks in Rainbow Basin the visitor can easily see that most of the Mojave Desert was once under water. This was millions of years ago. Geologists tell us that the Mojave River, which runs near here, is one of the few "wrong way" rivers in the world. It is blocked to the south by the San Bernardino Mountains, which is the only major mountain chain in the United States that runs east and west.

The Mojave River spills from these mountains and runs across the desert towards the northeast where it gradually disappears — except following a heavy rain when it enters Soda Lake. It is also one of the few rivers that begins at a lake and ends at a lake instead of going to the sea.

In a small brochure, available at the

*Continued on Page 39*

# Death Valley's Geological Yesteryears

by Helen Walker

**I**T HAS not been easy for the geologist of today to piece together the Death Valley of yesterday. The surfaces of the valley have been distorted by folding and tilting, swallowed by sea invasion, worn by wave action, eroded by wind and rain, and its skeletal remains exposed to the perils of extreme temperatures. But for what Death Valley lacks in order, she makes up for in the beauty she utilizes to camouflage her scars.

At the foot of the geologic time scale, is a unit of time referred to as the Archeozoic Era. It dates back two billion years—to a time when no life existed on earth. Consequently, no fossils are found in the rocks of this era. Death Valley, during the Archeozoic Era was submerged under a warm sea. Currents brought about abrasive action, which constantly wore away at the surfaces with the resulting sediments deposited to great depths. These deposits became the foundation for the limestone and sandstone rocks. At later periods, and under great pressures, they became metamorphised—and were characteristically changed into quartzite, micashist, and some marble.

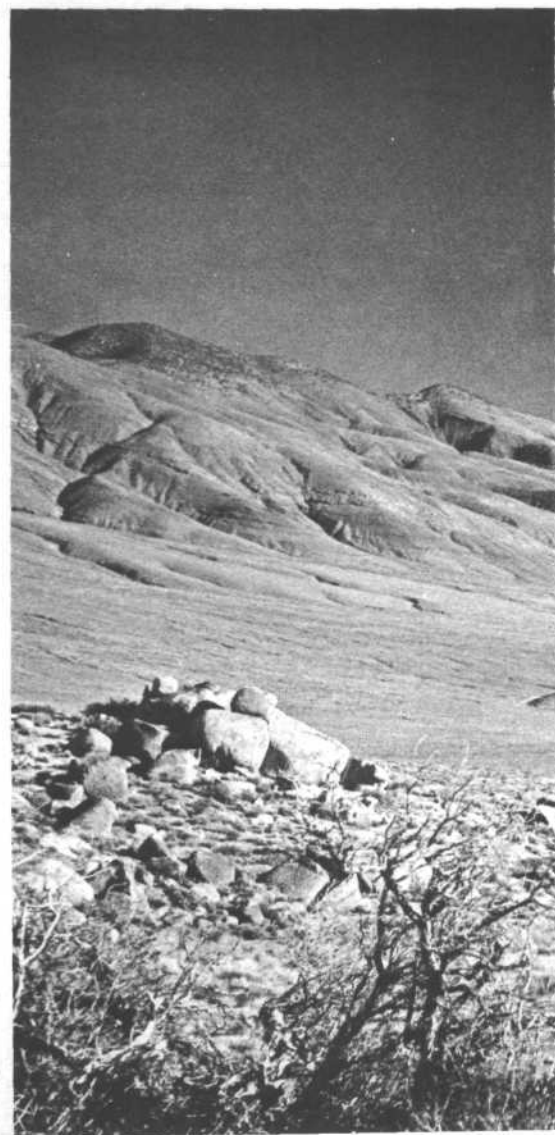
Land contours were recast when great energy from beneath the surface pressed upward and created mountains. During the folding and tilting, the earth yielded, forcing molten material to be ejected—

their substances being scattered atop the new heights. As the new mountains emerged, the seas withdrew and the cycle of erosion began anew.

Excellent examples of this period are found in the Black Mountains in the southern part of the valley. Also in the western part of the Panamint Mountain Range. Look for rocks of muted shades of gray and soft buff color, which, for the most part, are strata layers in various dimensions. They will be integrated with the dark porous basalt of the molten material that was ejected. Their affect does not create a sensation of beauty, but they do demand respect for their age—dating back to the Archeozoic and Proterozoic Eras of 1500 million years ago.

A step forward on the time scale, but still 500 million years back on our calendar, brings us to the exciting age of life. Our newly formed mountains, by this time, were worn down by the exposure to time and weather. Warm seas again invaded Death Valley, as they did in most of the Northern American continent. In this sea, the first marine life

*Standing alone on the floor of  
Butte Valley, Striped Butte presents  
a dramatic example  
of sedimentary intrusion.*





developed. Trilobite, a three lobed swimmer, measuring 2 or 3 inches in length, developed in great abundance. It became recognized as the guide fossil of the time. He swam in the company of the brachiopod, a two shelled animal; the cephalopod, a snail shaped shell fish; sponges, coral and crinoids. Their fossil remains, along with those of calcareous algae, are found in the limestone deposits of Death Valley today.

Deposits accumulated during this sea invasion are seen in the grays and yellow surfaces in Titus Canyon, and also in the Tucki Mountains. Fossil impregnated deposits are also noticeable around Stove Pipe Wells, and in the canyons to the northwest—Dry Bone, and Cottonwood Canyons.

Butte Valley on the east side of the Panamint Range is richly endowed with Paleozoic geology. You may enter in the family car from Warm Springs Canyon, or by the more rugged four-wheel-drive vehicle through Goler Wash, on the west-

ern slopes of the Panamints. On the gentle sloping floor of Butte Valley stands a mound of vertical sedimentary stripes, deposited during this era, but uplifted during an upheaval of a later date. It is logically called Striped Butte.

Evidence points to the probability that the seas remained in Death Valley longer than in most other areas. The fact is proven by the more advanced fossils of the Triassic Period, or early Mesozoic Era, found in Butte Valley explorations. During this prolonged submergence, a volcanic action caused an intrusion of Andestic Lava to flow and spread on the floor of the sea. Some theorize this was the prelude to the eventual volcanic activity responsible for creating the trough we know as Death Valley of today. Impoverishment of the land resulted from the lava flow, and today the area lies lifeless under its cover of volcanic debris. During this activity, the seas withdrew—and have not returned to date!

Early prospectors gambled their lives

and grubstakes, as they roamed the dry washes in search of the granitic intrusions, that meant pay dirt to them. The area was laced with these intrusions nearly 200 million years ago, during the Mesozoic Era. The identity of the granitic is easily recognizable by the whites through gray exterior color, added to the fact that the surface is usually roughed by abuse from weather.

Once famous mining towns of Harrisburg and Skidoo, located near Aguerberry Point, owe their existence to the proximity of this granite. Look for specimens along the highway to Wildrose, and from Aguerberry Point through Trail Canyon. The latter is an interesting drive, if you have a sturdy vehicle. Tailings from many old mine diggings make excellent rock hunting.

As we progress up the ladder of geologic time, there are no cut and dried lines of where one era begins and another ends. Here in Death Valley, they have literally been shuffled and restacked. Time overlaps, in sequences of millions of years, and occurrences are co-mingled. Today we are living in the Cenozoic Era, which has been in existence some 70 million years. The first 68 million years of this era geologists consider to be the Tertiary Period. The remaining time, they call, the Quaternary. This last essence of time brought two important factors to the earth—warm blooded mammals, including man, and the great Ice Age. Both helped write Death Valley history.

Our entire Northern Hemisphere was involved in the Ice Age. It is the run off that occurred when the weather conditions began to shrink the glaciers that we are most concerned with. Basins elsewhere began to fill, as the ice melted. It triggered a chain reaction that brought water as far south as Owens Valley, forming Owens Lake. And then overflowing into Little Lake, which in turn followed the pattern and emptied into China Lake, now a dry bed within the boundaries of Naval Weapons Center. The water continued its inundation through canyons, and finally created a body of water almost 150 miles long and 600 feet deep—Lake Manly. It enveloped Death Valley.

Scars and terraces were cut into the restrictive boundaries of the lake. Winds funneled between the mountain ranges, dashing waves and debris against rocky



shores. Best examples of these actions may be seen along the foothills of Black Mountain—upward from Mushroom Rock, in a distinguished line, is Manly Terrace. Again at Shoreline Butte, you may see where successive water levels left behind water marks. Beach gravel from the shores of Lake Manly may be inspected a short distance from Beatty, Nevada. Watch for smooth water-tumbled and polished pebbles.

Evaporation of the lake began approximately 20,000 years ago. It left behind silty deposits on the valley floor—remnants of the Pleistocene Epoch.

Exciting discoveries recently, of hand tools along the ancient shore line has accelerated interest in correlation of fact and artifact, with the hopes of placing man in this vicinity during this early Pleistocene Epoch, a million or so years ago.

Basic outlines of Death Valley, as we see it today, was begun many steps back on the ladder of time. But, one might venture to say, the finishing touches were added within a relative recent one or two million years ago. From Dante's Point, atop the 550 foot peak of Black Mountain, much of the drama is unfolded. The playa below dips to 282 feet below sea level—the lowest point in the United States, in contrast, Telescope Peak (11,049 feet), and Mt. Whitney (14,495 feet, highest point within the boundaries of the United States), are outlined against the skyline. The random white ground cover below, is a saline crust—comprised of common salt and cottonball ulexite. The latter being mined in the early days as borax. Devil's Golf Course, just north of Badwater, is another salt and gravel deposit. An aftermath of the evaporation of Lake Manly.

Sudden summer storms in Death Valley strike with violence and destruction. Water, finding no resistance on the naked hills, runs off and accumulates in the narrow canyons. In its constriction, it gathers forces and moves mud, boulders and brush forward in its frenzy to escape. Finally it spews out at the mouth of the canyon, building its alluvium into a fan-shape pile of debris. Hanaupah Fan, directly across from Dante's View, is one of the valley's most spectacular illustrations of an alluvial fan in the Death Valley of today.

The contrasts in color are telltale



wrinkles of age. Older materials are represented by the darker color, having been exposed long enough to take on a desert varnish, while the younger, or lighter material, is deposits of more recent storms—perhaps yesterday—perhaps ages ago.

Self-guided tours in Death Valley are very popular. Beginning in a split pattern at Furnace Creek Inn, one sees the most, in the least time and mileage. The right hand road skirts the western flank of the Black Mountains. Numerous side entries direct you to Desolation Canyon, Golden Canyon, Devils Golf Course, Artist Palette, and finally Badwater. Ground surface, for the most part, is of the Tertiary Period—perhaps the most colorful part of the landscape in Death Valley.

The soil consists mostly of alluvium from ancient seasonal lakes, with portion of volcanic material intermixed. The colors range from somber grays of the conglomerates, to light shades of yellow and buffs in the siltstone formations. These are picturesquely contrasted against blues, greens, reds, and oranges of the volcanic intrusive rocks. Weather has worn their surfaces into figure-like features that challenge your imagination.

*Top photo: Marine fossils found in Dry Bone Canyon. They inhabited Death Valley during the time of the warm seas. Right: Dante's View from atop Black Mountain.*

Early mammals visited the intermittent lakes. Footprints were pressed into the moist exterior. Each layer was preserved, as mud washed in to fill the void—then, in the same manner—they were revealed during a sudden storm and run off. One might have watched a few of the larger dinosaurs, camels, small ancestor to the





horse, and a distant relative to the cat family—joined with the smaller varieties of birds and rodents. Some came to quench their thirst, others to satisfy their hunger.

A sight not to be missed along the main highway, travelling toward Stove Pipe Wells, is the sand dunes. These migrating dunes cover a wide area, and, by following the road signs, you are able to drive safely into their depths. They are created by a flow of wind currents that sweep down the Death Valley trough from the north, picking up particles and debris along their route. Their path was diverted by the Tucki Mountains, and the eddies were forced to veer off at a reduced speed. Change of course and velocity caused them to drop their airborne particles. These trapped breezes constantly rework the surface, and the drifting sand blots out footprints of both two and four-footed intruders.

Toward the northern boundary of the Monument is Ubehebe Crater. A relatively recent spectacle, having been formed perhaps only a short 25,000 years ago. It is an explosive volcano, of the Maar type—one whose chief characteris-

tic is a flat bottom. Early Indians referred to it as the basket. As you look down into its 800 foot depth, you may visualize the magnitude of the explosion that created it.

You cannot do justice to Death Valley in one trip. There is no duplication of its historical and geological beauty. In February, 1933, President Hoover proclaimed Death Valley as a National Monument, thus assuring our generation, and the ones yet to come, that this raw beauty will remain undisturbed. The Monument covers an area of nearly 3000 square miles.

The Visitors Center, near Furnace Creek Ranch, will assist you in orientating your visit. Displays of early history and geology, lectures and slide shows, are provided with you and your family in mind. Other relics of the past are on display at Furnace Creek Ranch and Stove Pipe Wells Village.

It may be a problem and a challenge to the geologist trying to untangle and correlate his findings, but your visit will be no problem, and your only challenge, will be to see as much as you can in your limited time. □



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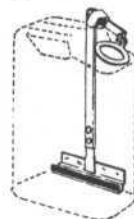
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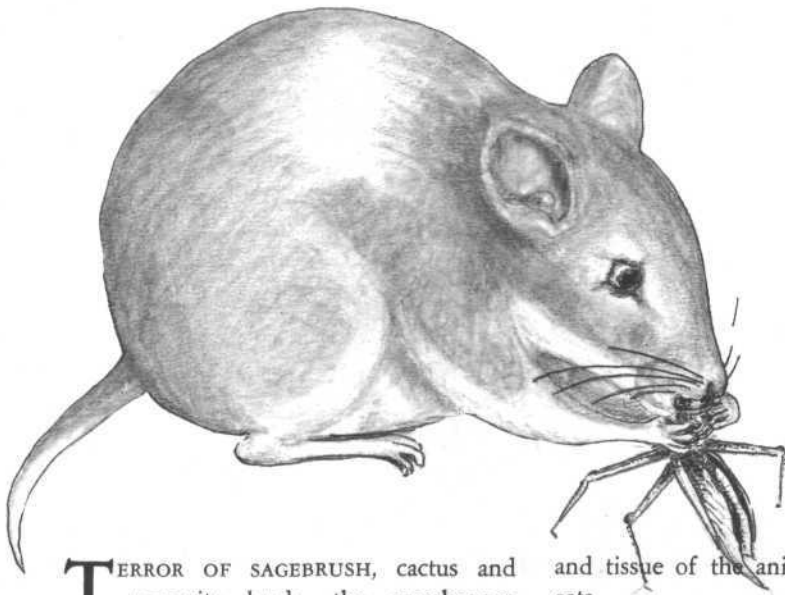
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# DESERT DESPERADO

## (Alias the Grasshopper Mouse)



by K. L. Boynton  
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**T**ERROR OF SAGEBRUSH, cactus and mesquite lands, the grasshopper mouse proves it pays to be tough. This whiskered, desert desperado wreaks havoc among other small rodents, dining regularly on pocket mice and kangaroo rats as well as the hapless hoppers which give him his popular name. He also slays death-dealing scorpions, considering them too a top delicacy, hence his other name—scorpion mouse.

It doesn't take a psychiatrist to see this is a very unmouse-like behavior indeed. Other wee and timorous members of his tribe (deer, mice, house mice, etc.) are plant and seed eaters, with insects added when available, and a bit of garbage inspecting on the side. But this fellow turns to the vegetable department only when nothing tasty is walking around.

This is the chief reason why his kind flourishes to the point of being the characteristic animal of the arid plains and desert lands. Even in summer's blast furnace heat, his water requirements are filled and then some from the blood

and tissue of the animals and insects he eats.

Fortified with carbohydrates and protein reserves compliments of his meat diet, and with fat for warmth piled even on his tail, he's active all winter. Regular meals composed of hibernating neighbors, insect eggs and larvae, located by highly efficient nosework, plus seeds from private storage, keep him fat and sassy. Only the worst of weather finds him snug in his burrow.

A hunter by instinct, the grasshopper mouse is a bundle of quick reactions, run by high metabolism, and endowed with terrific persistence. Stocky and robust, he has weight and power. Greatly stepped-up senses of hearing and smell make this fellow a nighttime hunter deluxe. This is when he operates and, indeed, in a very unmouse-like manner. For, emerging from his burrow as the great desert is darkening, he opens his night of hunting with a high pitched challenging call that must strike terror in many a pocket mouse heart.

Sniffing the air, the grasshopper mouse picks up scent of these long-legged seed

hunters and moves quickly towards them. Short legged himself, and no good at a long chase, his is a fast track, a sudden spring. A swift bite at the base of the skull and the world is short one pocket mouse.

Zoologist Ruffer set about a study, and one of the first tests he made was to see what happened when a cotton rat, weighing three times more than the grasshopper mouse and no sissy himself, was the target for the night. Undaunted by his adversary's size, the mouse set to with a shrill tally-ho! Attack after attack was made and kept up so long and with such deadly persistence that the cotton rat, although defending itself furiously, finally made the mistake of exposing its back. In a flash the mouse was upon it; a quick bite at the base of the skull, and cotton rat was the menu's specialty that night.

Scorpions are tasty snacks for the grasshopper mouse, who knows by instinct exactly where the deadly sting mechanism is and how to cope with it. No matter how efficiently the scorpion wields its



tail with lightning thrusts and sidewise lashes, the mouse, springing about and attacking from all angles gets through the defense at last. The crusty tail is broken with one hard bite—the weapon immobilized. Another bite on the scorpion's head finishes the job.

Working from the rear forward, the mouse takes the legs off one by one, eating the good base parts and flinging the rest away. Then he opens the body shell, dining on the interior. Ten minutes work and all that is left is the empty husk.

Grasshopper mice youngsters are tough from the start. Not for nothing, too, do they have such big ears! They can hear insects going about their business, particularly those of the grasshopper tribe who are very noisy fellows, their hard covering scraping and crackling in their kick-offs. Many of the hard shelled beetles, especially the scarabs, are clumsy fliers, landing on their backs and thus making a noisy deal of getting right side up again. A young mouse, not half grown, jumps onto a grasshopper almost as big as he is, grabbing it by the front end to bite its head. Little and not yet expert, he may be knocked over by the insect's mighty kicks, but does he let go? NEVER.

Vegetable eaters among animals do not need much of a stamping ground since normally there is food for the simple taking. A hunter, on the other hand, has to have a big enough area to assure that there will be enough prey animals therein to provide a fellow with a living.

As to be expected, the grasshopper mouse takes plenty of elbow room. The home range of an adult male is about 7.8 acres and that of a female 5.8. A big territory such as this helps disperse the mouse population, and divide up the available food supplies. It is a very significant reason for grasshopper mouse success in the desert regions.

Within this home range is a tighter territory considered PRIVATE and so marked by the mouse who digs small holes at strategic spots and rolls in them, marking them well with his personal smell provided by glands in the anal region. These are NO TRESPASSING signposts warning other grasshopper mice not to cross the line.

A grasshopper mouse couple embarking upon the journeys of matrimony, have a lot to do to set up housekeeping, mainly

involving the excavation of various property holdings.

First to be dug is the nest chamber. Mrs. G. Mouse, after much indecision, selects the site, and Mr. G. Mouse takes over the job of digging. Up on his hind feet, he braces himself on his tail, and holding his forefeet together, pitches in, scooping and hauling the sand back under his belly. Then rising up on his front feet, he delivers some straight back kicks, first one foot and then the other, shoving the sand backwards. At this point Mrs. Mouse, if she is of the mind, will assist, forming in line behind her spouse and kicking the sand on back as he shoves consignments out to her.

Thus there is no mound at the doorway, for the sand is kicked far and wide until the way is slick and smooth. With teamwork like that and cooperation from the desert sand, 5 minutes of hard work makes the nest burrow ready to move in.

This nest burrow, although of lilliputian dimensions since the householders are so small, is a palatial affair. Some 48 cm. long and about 14 cm. down below the surface, it is U-shaped with the bedroom in the middle. This chamber is widened out into a room 12 by 9 cm. in size, with a 7 cm. ceiling. Installed in the middle is a nice soft platform of grass. Only one of the entrances is opened thoroughly, the other plugged up but easy to open from the inside. Both are plugged up during the heat of the day.

It must be comfortable inside, the sand being a very good insulator, for the temperature stays between 90 and 100° even though the surface temperature might go to 128° or higher in the day.

Retreat burrows are dug next. These are simple holes spotted around the territory for quick exits in case coyotes or owls are around. Cache holes (10 cm. long) are located here and there, filled with seed and covered with care for emergency food in case meat supplies are low.

The signpost holes are about 3 cm. long and marked with the pair's smell, are dug last. Foolhardy encroaching mice get the business from Mr. G. Mouse in knock-down, drag-out fights, Mrs. M. staying demurely on the sidelines. But should she herself meet an interloper, it's her fight, and she's just the girl that can handle it.

Offspring arrive in batches of 3 to 5

to a litter about four times a season as standard. For the mouse tribe, these are low figures, which means that survival potential of the young is high.

How can this be in the hard conditions imposed by the desert? Good parental care is the basic reason, pa even taking a hand in slicking up the infants and keeping the nest burrow clean. The youngsters mature quickly and are ready for family raising themselves when 40 to 44 days old. Since the season is on from April 1 or before to August, anybody born in time can add to this year's grasshopper mouse population figures.

Most of all it's the point of view: tough, determined and a hard worker, the grasshopper mouse picks a permanent mate also tough, determined and a hard worker. They actively defend their territory assuring food supplies for the youngsters until they leave home to establish their own kingdoms.

Full of energy from his heavy protein diet and armed with instinctive hunting skill, keen senses and fast reactions, this is the fellow who thoroughly proves that even a mouse can be mighty. □

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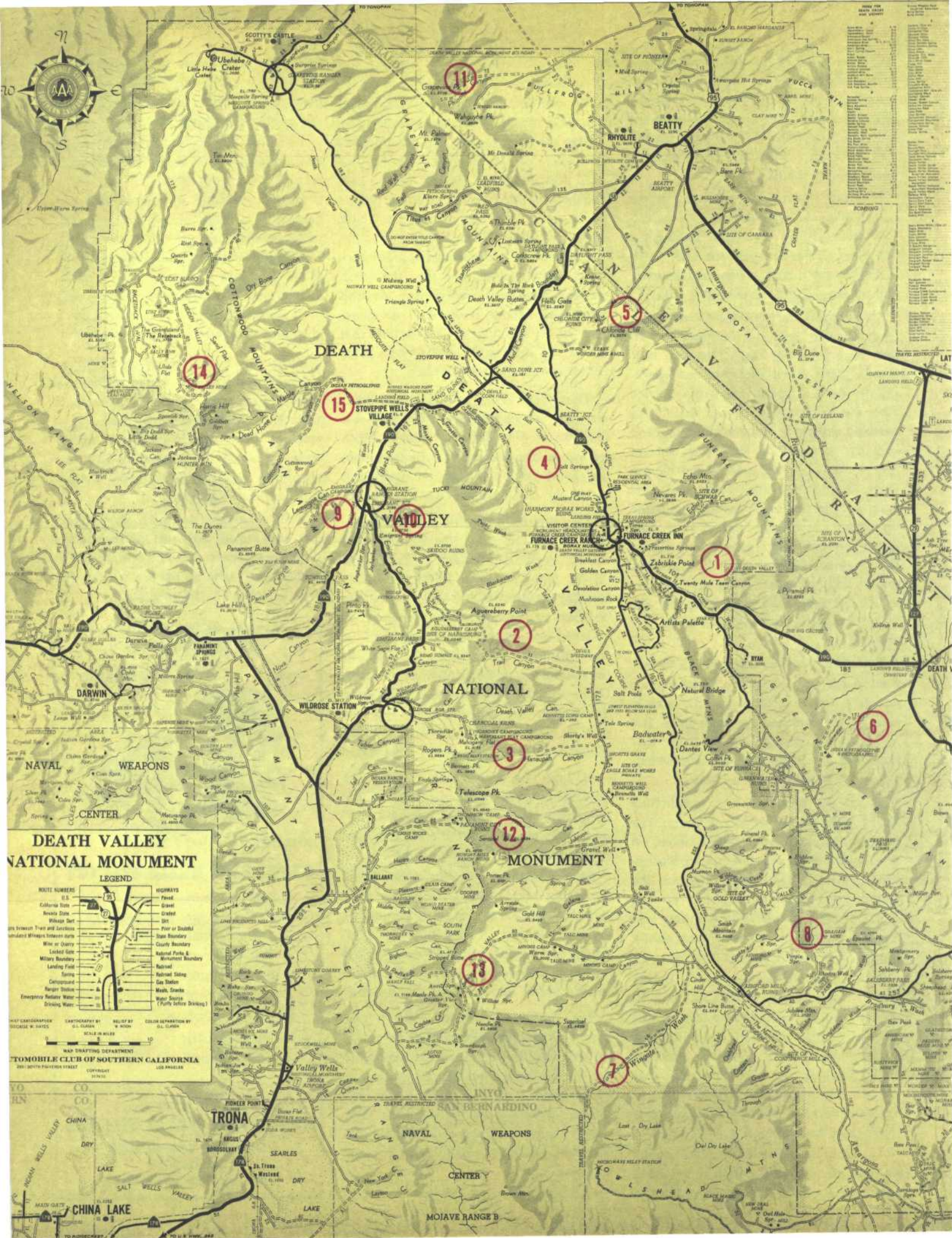
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# Death Valley Trips

by Roger Mitchell

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of Southern California.

**Editor's Note:** Just prior to going to press the Ranger Station in Death Valley informed us that due to severe flash flooding during the summer some of the back roads were in doubtful condition. It is imperative that you check at one of the ranger stations designated by a black circle on the accompanying map before attempting any of the following fifteen back-country trips.

**I**F YOU ARE one who comes to Death Valley to find the peace and quiet that only the desert can offer, then you will probably want to avoid tourist attractions such as Bad Water and Artist's Drive. Fortunately the Death Valley Country is full of hidden little corners, unknown by most and visited by few.

These forgotten spots may contain a bit of history, some grand scenery, or a page from nature's book of the desert. A few such places may be reached in the family automobile, but most require a vehicle made for back country travel. The ever-popular trail bikes and dune buggies are suitable for short trips but for maximum room and comfort a four-wheel drive vehicle is the answer. For those with such vehicles, Death Valley offers an endless variety of interesting back country trips.

One word of warning—Death Valley National Monument is a member of our National Park system and the rangers have the duty to preserve and protect the area for the enjoyment of all Americans,

both present and future generations. To meet this end the National Park Service has had to impose a few regulations upon Monument visitors. One rule of particular significance to back country explorers is that *all vehicles must stay on established roads*. This need not be of great concern because all the trips suggested here are on "established roads" although you may not think so at times.

## Five Half - Day Trips

**①** **HOLE IN THE WALL.** As the name implies, this interesting geologic curiosity is a narrow gap eroded out of a 200-foot-high wall of rock. Take State Route 190 up Furnace Creek Wash. At a point 0.7 miles above the entrance to Twenty Mule Team Canyon, a small sign on the left reads "Jeep Trail, Hole In The Wall." Turn left here and make your way up the wash. Hole in the Wall is 3.6 miles from the highway. The area is particularly picturesque late in the afternoon when the sun's low rays cut long shadows through the gap. You can continue up the wash past an abandoned



travertine quarry to end in the Red Amphitheater five miles beyond.

**2** TRAIL CANYON. The sites of Harrisburg and Skidoo can be easily reached from the Wildrose Canyon Road, but this route lacks imagination and challenge. A more interesting route is from the east, up Trail Canyon. The road is usually good, but the grades are always steep. In 11 miles you will climb from 276 feet below sea level to a high point of 6240 feet above sea level at Aguerberry Point.

Take the Badwater Road south, turning

**3** HANAUPAH CANYON. Seven miles south of Trail Canyon is another slash in the Panamints ascended by a steep road. While this route does not reach the crest of the range, it is worth exploring. The Hanaupah Canyon starts west from Shorty's Well at an elevation of -251 feet. In less than a mile it climbs over a prominent fault scarp in the alluvial fan. After nine dusty miles the road reaches a stream flowing from Hanaupah Spring, almost 4000 feet above the valley floor. Recent mining activities have pushed the road several thousand

the way you will pass Salt Springs where strange and exotic birds have occasionally been seen, far from their usual habitats.

**5** CHLORIDE CLIFF. To reach this old mining camp, take the Daylight Pass Road towards Beatty, Nevada. About three miles south of the Pass, a sign points right towards Chloride Cliff. Although not maintained, the road is relatively good as it winds its way past the head of Monarch Canyon. A little less than five miles from the highway, the road forks. Take the right fork and the ruins of Chloride Cliff are three miles beyond. Chloride City and the Chloride Cliff Mine date back to the Rhyolite excitement around the turn of the century. A fine view of the valley is offered by the ridge top.

### Five Full Day Trips

**6** GREENWATER CANYON. The trip through Greenwater Canyon can take a couple of hours or a couple of days. It all depends on your interests and the condition of the route. If the last flood has washed a lot of loose sand out of the canyon, then the route is more difficult because you must dodge numerous boulders now exposed. On the other hand, if loose sand has been washed into the canyon, then the boulders are covered but the soft sand presents difficulty.

Take the Dantes View Road turning left on the Greenwater Valley Road at a point five miles south of the Ryan turn-off. Eight miles south of the pavement a side road turns left toward Greenwater Canyon. Look for petroglyphs pecked into the black volcanic rocks. The canyon also contains pictographs, similar to petroglyphs except the designs are painted on the rock surface. Rockhounds may find jasper and agate, and collecting is allowed because Greenwater Canyon is outside the Monument boundary.

**7** WINGATE WASH. At the extreme south end of the Monument, Wingate Wash is one of the least visited areas in Death Valley. This was the route taken by the famous 20-mule teams while hauling their loads of borax from Death Valley to Mojave. The entire route cannot be followed today because the China Lake Naval Weapons Center has a firing range in the upper part of

*The overnight trip through Goler Wash goes through Butte Valley and Anvil Spring, a dependable source of water and a convenient camping spot for many.*

left on the "West Side Road" at a point six miles south of Furnace Creek Inn. Continue across the valley floor another five miles. Here a sign will point right to Trail Canyon. Several miles up the canyon you will find water and many old mines. Antimony, copper, gold, lead, silver, tungsten, and zinc have been found here. From the point where the canyon forks, it is 2500 feet of steep grades to the top. Once at the summit I'm sure you will agree it was a much more interesting route.

feet higher, but the road beyond the miners camp is not yet open to the public.

**4** SALT SPRINGS. At a point six miles south of Furnace Creek Inn, take the West Side Road across the valley floor to the Devil's Speedway. Here at a point four miles from the highway, a pair of wheel tracks starts north along the west side of the valley. If you are not afraid of a little soft sand, you can follow this road north to Salt Creek where a good road is again reached. On



Wingate Wash. The lower 15 miles is readily accessible however.

A half mile west of the West Side Road, on the Warm Springs Canyon Road, a pair of wheel tracks starts south across the sandy desert. These tracks enter Wingate Wash after some four miles. After a few miles you will be able to grasp the immense size of Wingate Wash. Plan on taking the whole day to explore the canyon.

**8** BLACK MOUNTAINS. If you like to poke around old mines, then perhaps you should drive up some of the canyons in the Black Mountains at the southern end of the valley. In the vicinity of Jubilee Pass, Virgin Spring Canyon, Confidence Wash, and Rhodes Wash all offer out of the way places to explore.

**9** LEMOIGNE CANYON. In the past few years it seems like the route into Lemoigne Canyon has been washed out more than it has been open. If you can make it, this secluded spot is worthy of a days outing. Jean Lemoigne, or "Cap" as he was known to his friends, came to this canyon to mine a small vein of silver, and made it his home. His stone cabin remains. The rough nine-mile route starts southwest from State Route 190 at a point 2.7 miles north of Emigrant Ranger Station or 5.8 miles south of Stovepipe Wells Village.

**10** TELEPHONE CANYON. The washes on the southwest slopes of Tucki Mountain offer miles of back country exploring. The key is to get into Telephone Canyon, the mouth of which is just a mile north of the mouth of Emigrant Canyon. From Emigrant Ranger Station, take the Wildrose Canyon Road south 2.5 miles to the entrance to Emigrant Canyon. Turn left making your way across the wash, then look for the traces of a faint road going north along the mountain front. It is 1.6 miles to the entrance to Telephone Canyon. Upon entering the canyon you will notice overhanging beds of conglomerate rock, eroded from beneath by those rare moments when the canyon contains water. In less than a mile the canyon forks. The left fork wanders east and can be followed by four-wheel-drive vehicles for many

*Continued on Page 36*



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# Death Valley '49ers National Encampment Program

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Death Valley's winter season starts November 6 through 9 when the 20th Annual Death Valley '49ers Encampment draws thousands of spectators to the area to participate in the "West's Greatest Free Entertainment." For background on the National Encampment, see Peek in the Publisher's Poke on page 4.

Following is the schedule of events:

## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6

- 7:30 p.m.—CAMPFIRE, Stove Pipe Wells Village. Community singing and talks about old-timers, followed by dancing.
- 8:30 p.m.—NATURALIST TALK, Museum and Visitors' Center, Furnace Creek Ranch.

## FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7

- 8:00 a.m.—HISTORICAL BREAKFAST, Stove Pipe Wells Village. Matt Ryan, long-time resident of Death Valley is principal speaker. Price, \$1.75.
- 8:00 a.m.—HOOTENANNY BREAKFAST, Furnace Creek Golf Course. Western songs and old-time fiddlers. Price, \$1.75.
- 10:30 a.m.—CONDUCTED TOUR, starting at Visitors' Center, to Ubehebe Crater, Scotty's Castle and North End points. Use your vehicle.
- 1:30 p.m.—DEATH VALLEY TRAIL RIDERS arrive at Furnace Creek Ranch after 125-mile horseback ride.
- 7:30 p.m.—CAMPFIRE, Texas Springs. Community sing and songs of the Old West by Bob Lewis. Historical talks.
- 8:30 p.m.—NATURALIST TALK, Museum and Visitors' Center, Furnace Creek Ranch.
- 9:00 p.m.—DANCING FOR EVERYONE, western and modern, Stove Pipe Wells Village. Also dancing at Furnace Creek Ranch.

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8

- 6:00 a.m.—PHOTOGRAPHY SESSION, Sand Dunes Campground. New event for photographers. Lecture by R. Chalmers Graham, APSA. Bring your camera!
- 8:00 a.m.—PHOTOGRAPHERS' BREAKFAST, Stove Pipe Wells Village. Paul D. Yarrow, internationally known photographer and author, will speak and display photographs. Price \$1.75.

- 8:00 a.m.—AUTHORS' BREAKFAST, Furnace Creek Golf Course. Present will be outstanding writers of the West. Featured speaker is Richard F. Pourade, Editor Emeritus of the San Diego Union and noted historian and author.

- 10:00 a.m.—CONDUCTED TOUR starting at Visitors' Center through center of Valley and ending at Stove Pipe Wells in time for chuck wagon.

- 12:00 Noon—CHUCK WAGON LUNCH, Stove Pipe Wells Village, Western style chuck wagon chow. Price, \$1.75.

- 2:00 p.m.—BURRO FLAPJACK SWEEPSTAKES, Stove Pipe Wells Village. A hilarious race of old prospectors and their burrows who must walk around the arena, cook a flapjack and then feed it to the burro. Action is right in front of spectators.

- 7:30 p.m.—EVENING ASSEMBLY, Furnace Creek Ranch. Color slide show by Paul D. Yarrows, FPSA.

- 8:45 p.m.—OLD - FASHIONED FIDDLERS' CONTEST, same location as above. Best fiddlers in the West compete.

- 8:30 p.m.—NATURALIST TALK, Visitors' Center, Furnace Creek Ranch.

- 9:00 p.m.—DANCING FOR EVERYONE, Stove Pipe Wells Village.

## SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9

- 7:00 a.m.—PROTESTANT SUNRISE SERVICE, Desolation Canyon.

- 7:30 a.m.—CATHOLIC MASS, Visitors' Center, Furnace Creek Ranch.

- 8:30 a.m.—ARTISTS' BREAKFAST, Furnace Creek Golf Course. Top-flight Western artists work on a new western scene plus display of their works. Sale of paintings. Price, \$1.75.

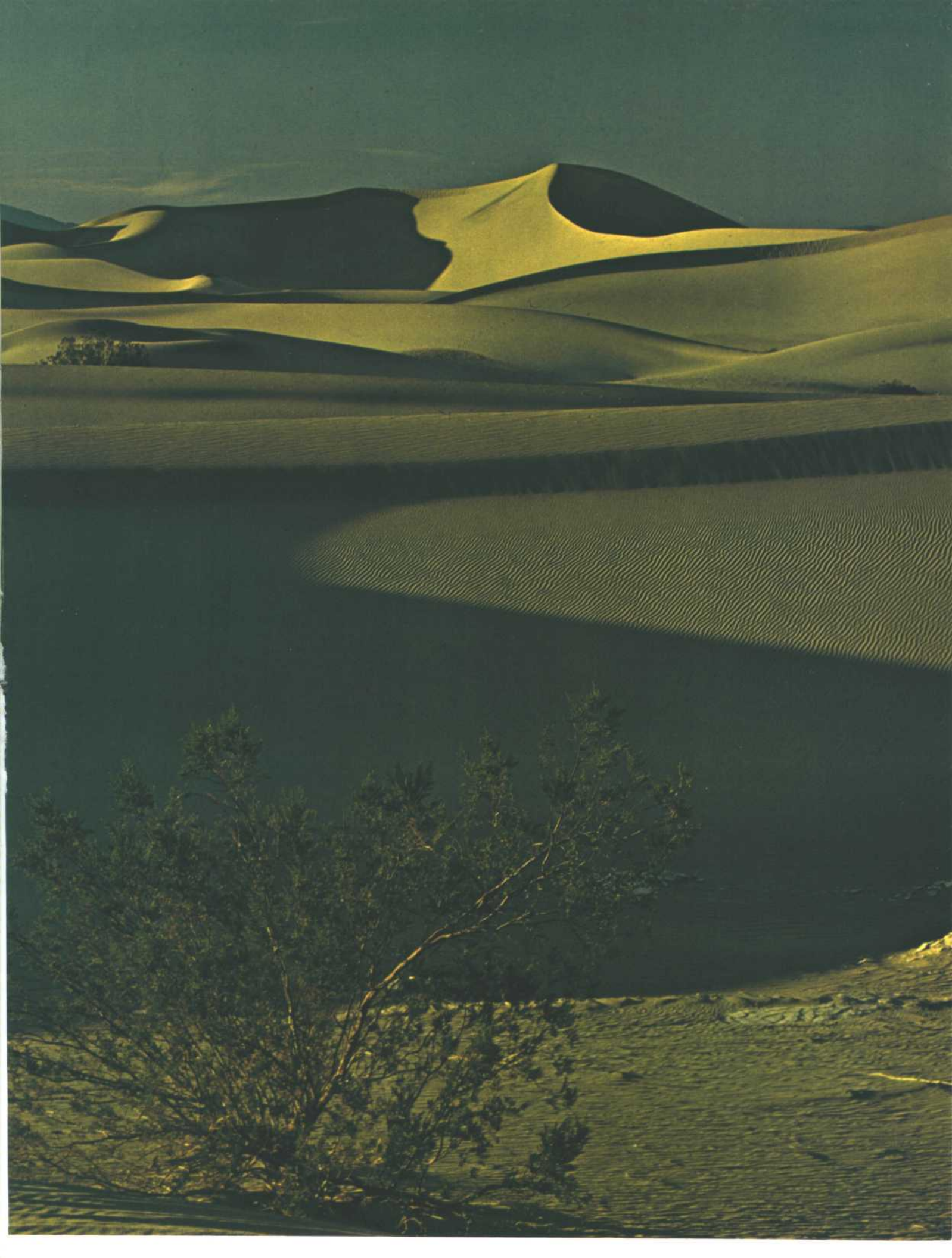
- 10:30 a.m.—CONDUCTED TOUR, starting at Visitors' Center and going to south section of the Valley.

- 7:30 p.m.—NATURALIST TALK, Visitors' Center, Furnace Creek Ranch.

*The ever-shifting sand dunes of Death Valley, near Stove Pipe Wells, are caught in the fading light of day by David Muench of Santa Barbara, Calif.*







# The Legend of Chimney Rock

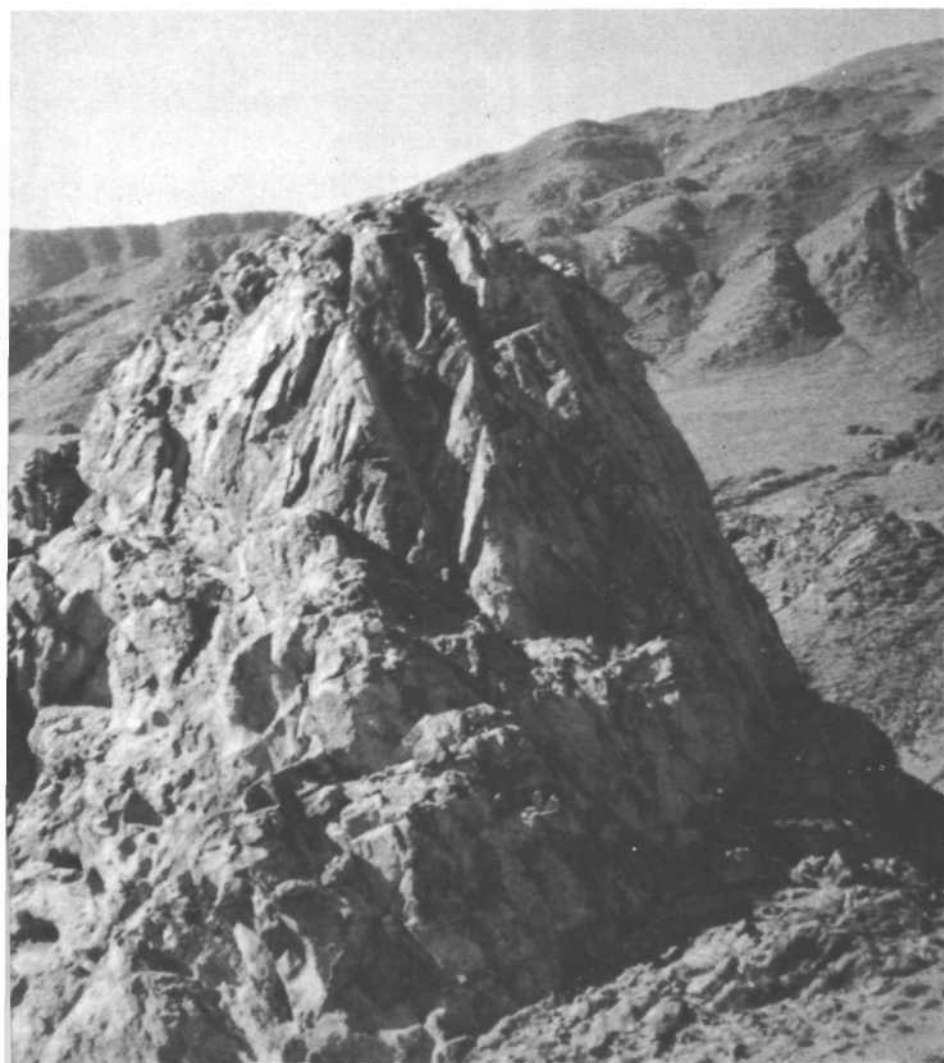
by  
Raymond Bradley



**S**OUTH AND east from Victorville, along California's State 18, I overlooked an historic landmark. I now knew the story of Chimney Rock was more than just a legend. The great monolith towered beside me as I surveyed from its surrounding canyon's rim of fractured granite the breadth of Lucerne Valley.

Below, on the distant floor, the thin ribbon of highway cut across the dust-burned, dry bed of Rabbit Lake, guarding the entrance to the little hidden canyon surrounding this column of rock. This pillar of nature, like some great chimney from the forges of Thor, rose some 300 feet into the bright blue of the





desert sky.

Long shadows of the San Bernardino and Sierra Madre mountains were stealing swiftly across the desert, as the pink hues of the hour tinged snow crested "Old Baldy" beyond the mountainous gap of the Cajon Pass.

It wasn't hard to imagine that I was standing as the Indian youth of 12 summers had eight decades ago as he watched a cloud of dust moving slowly across the desert. It came from the shadows of the pass before the great snow-capped mountain.

For a long time he watched the sun's

rays tipping the dust clouds with bronze as they floated upward into the still hot air. Tall he stood, staring down his long nose with pride, as he felt the thrill of being the brother of Gray Horse, who at last had outwitted the pursuing whites, and was now returning with his brave raiders. There would be much dancing about the fires tonight before the great tall rock.

Turning slowly, he looked back into the shadows of the canyon, where a dark cave held the little white girl. He hoped that Gray Horse wouldn't bring any more slaves. She had come with the first raid-

ers to return from the valley of smokes (San Bernardino). They had passed through the mountain and the valley of the bears, where a sudden snow had caught and stopped the white posse.

Now the old squaw was calling him. He could see her in the gathering gloom of the canyon below, as she waddled before her fire. Momentarily he glanced out over the desert again. If it hadn't been for the old woman's scolding he might have seen the other dust cloud far back in the mountain shadow.

The old squaw jerked her head in motion for him to eat. Deftly he plucked a skewered piece of meat from before the sizzling embers.

"Take a piece to the little white one," the old woman nodded knowingly.

The boy snatched another skewer from the embers; then standing, he eyed the water skin close by the squatting woman. Shrugging his shoulders, he turned toward the cave.

"Take the water," he heard her muffled voice from beneath the blanket about her head.

He could see the girl's white dress far back in the shadows of the cave. She moved as he held out the skewered meat. Quickly he sat, cross-legged, with the water skin before him.

Cautiously the girl moved toward him, she hadn't cried now for two days, and she was making sounds. He didn't know, but somehow he understood she was pleased for the food.

The old squaw had guessed her to be the same age as the boy. The girl squat to a cross-legged position and they ate the meat in silence. He held his hands out in cupped fashion, and this time she understood. Tilting the water bag, she poured water for him to drink.

Pleased with what he had taught her, he laughed, then they both giggled. She held out her cupped hands. Jumping quickly to his feet, he yelled, "No brave serves squaw!" She shrank away, not understanding, as he ran from the cave.

There was noise in the canyon below. The raiding party had returned and Gray Horse was looking for him.

"There, do you think you are big enough to ride that black stallion?" Gray Horse pointed to a shiny black, stand-

*Continued on Page 28*

**A**FTER SLUMBERING undisturbed for almost 50 years, the ghosts of Randsburg are about to be evicted. The semi-ghost town in California's Kern County, which has hung to life by a thread, is once more starting to boom. This time it is arts and crafts instead of gold and silver which bring people to this little-known corner of the Mojave Desert.

The barber shop, whose doors were closed 18 years ago, now houses an art gallery and studio operated by the desert painter, Francilu Hansen. Although the shop walls are decorated with dozens of desert vista and landscapes, the biggest sellers are oil paintings of outhouses painted directly on the wood she tore out of the shop's partitions.

Next door is the Desert Museum, usually open only on weekends. Curator Harold Beck, a former prospector, has filled the building with samples of his gold mining days. Nuggets, gold dust and ore are mixed with the other museum displays of mining equipment and Western Americana.

Beck also manufactures a dry washer for the recovery of placer gold. Although the washer weighs only 35 pounds, Beck says it can handle 2000 pounds of gravel every hour with a 95 percent recovery of gold and scheelite (tungsten).

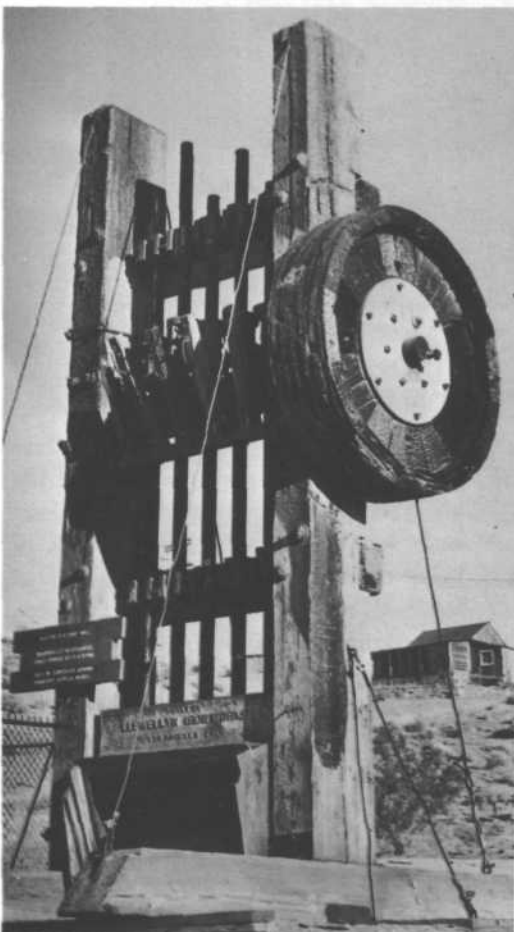
Next to the general store, the oldest business in town is Purington's Desert Shop, across the street from the museum. Arland and Eldora Purington are credited with starting the bottle rush about 25 years ago. "When we started out," Eldora Purington told me recently, "you could gather bottles by the arm loads. When you went to a ghost town, you could find more than you could carry away."

Since then, the pair have sold 16,000 bottles and see no end in sight. "We found every bottle ourselves," Purington said, gesturing around the room filled with rare bottles. "There are still plenty of bottles waiting to be found," his wife added. "But now you have to work hard and be a detective to locate them." Expert detectives themselves, the Purington's will offer advice to anyone who asks for it.

Some of their hints include looking for tin cans with soldered seams, bits of



*Above: Arland and Eldora Purington of Randsburg are champion bottle hounds. They have found more than 16,000 antique bottles! Below: All that remains of an old stamp mill used in the Randsburg area. Called a Baltic 5 Stamp Mill, it was converted from a 10 stamp due to smaller operations and then finally abandoned.*



# RAN





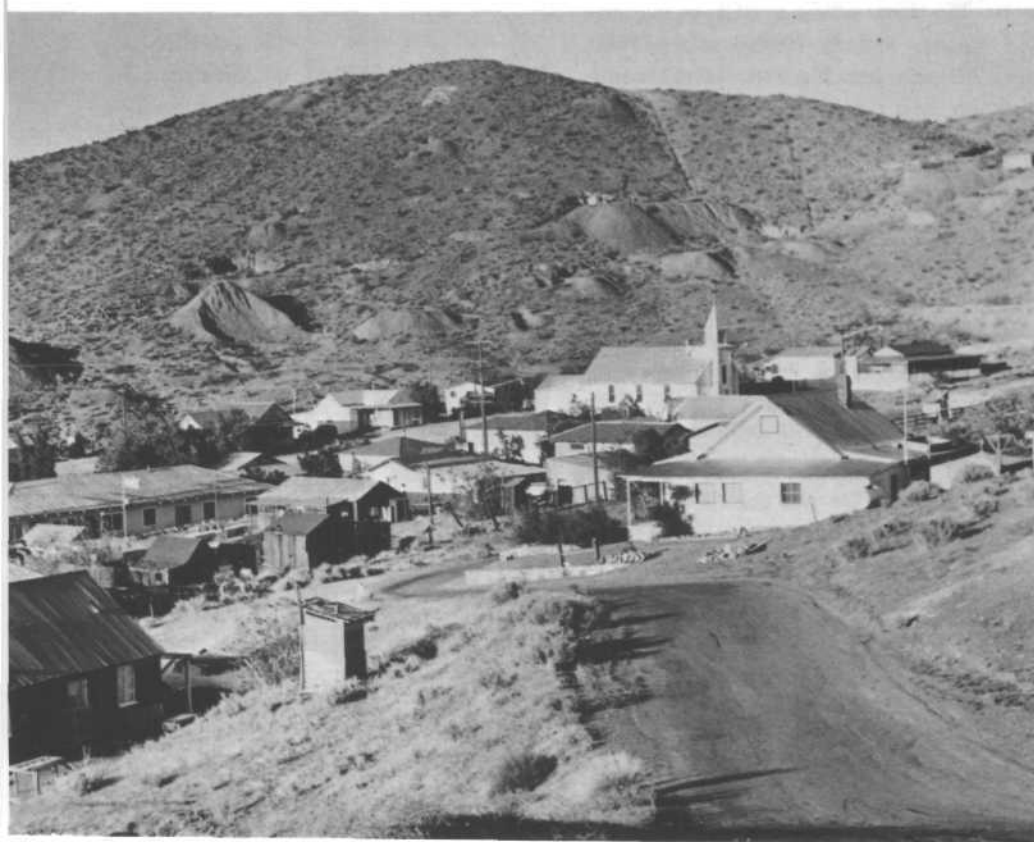
# DSBURG REBORN

by  
Frank Taylor

Located on a paved road just off U. S. Highway 395 approximately 100 miles northeast of Los Angeles, Randsburg makes an interesting stop on the way to or from Death Valley. The surrounding country is ideal for rock hounding and camping

*Left: Randsburg as it appeared in the year 1897.*

*Below: Randsburg as it appears today, cradled in the arms of hills scarred by the constant search for rare metals and gold.*



broken glass on the surface that have turned purple indicating more bottles are probably buried nearby, and checking stands of Tamarisk trees for signs of a camp or town.

The Puringtons recently celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary and attribute most of their contentment to the fact they still look for old bottles together. "We enjoy being out in the desert with each other," Eldora said, "besides it's been quite profitable for us." With 16,000 bottle sales as proof, nobody's going to argue with that statement.

The Randsburg General Store across from the Puringtons is hardly changed from the days of the Yellow Aster Mine boom (see Desert, Nov. '64). The aroma of hundreds of items on the crowded shelves is a reminder of things past. Old miners sit on the front steps and talk. Inside, the tin ceiling and old mahogany bar where sodas are served now, is the same as it was in the early 1900s and 1920s.

The White House Hotel and bar remains closed most of the time. "They don't open on weekends except when they feel like it," Beck said with a shrug of his shoulders, "and you never know when they will feel like coming up here." At the other end of the street is the strangest business of all to open in Randsburg. Housed in the former garage and service station, the Renaissance and Baroque Musical Instrument Company is busy making harpsichords.

The owners, Jay Witcher and Henry Hunnel expect to be turning out 10 harpsichords a month in a short time. Right now they have three nearly completed instruments on the assembly line with more on the way. Selling for \$2100 and up, the harpsichords are big business. The owners are predicting their new enterprise will be the largest factory in the world for the repair, construction and design of harpsichords. A full time crew, plus the owners now work seven-days-a-week in the remodeled shop.

The new boom in Randsburg may not match the first one when 4000 people crowded into the tiny community, and \$25,000,000 in rich ore was dug from the earth, but, after almost 75 years, Randsburg and its ghosts are ready for almost anything. Even a harpsichord factory!

## LEGEND OF CHIMNEY ROCK

*Continued from Page 25*

ing nervously tethered at the end of the hitching line.

"Wise brother shall see how I can ride."

The narrow canyon entrance thundered and echoed with wild whoops and pounding hoof beats, as horse and rider melted into one. With the speed of the wind they swept out onto the dry lake bed.

At a leisurely cantor he returned. The youth slipped to the ground to affectionately stroke the great mane as the animal slurped the water from the cool pool.

Night shadows had settled, and the big fire before the rock flicked high lights along the canyon's wall to bounce off the great chimney reaching into the darkness above. Halfway across the valley, others watched intently the glowing reflections dancing against the night sky.

A few braves still danced drunkenly about the cooling embers of the fire, while others slouched, or lounged sleepily grinning beside the squaws and child-



*Could this be the dark cave where the little white girl was held captive?*

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ren who were tiring of festivities.

A full moon, high in the zenith, lent a placid hallowness to the scene below, especially to eyes watching from the canyon rim.

At the first echoing rifle crack, the old squaw, already sitting asleep huddled beneath her blankets, rolled easily over on her side. Following flashes of fire burst spasmodically from around the canyon top. The sharp reports mingled with screams of women and frightened children, as whining and ricocheting bullets emphasized the high pitch of near panic.

Any movement in the canyon became visible to those on the rim of the canyon, and immediately drew a volley of fire. There was one spot of shelter. A little draw off the canyon where the horses were tethered. This was the most natural place for the Indian youth to be, petting his mount, when the attack began.

Almost immediately a dozen braves swarmed into the narrow draw with rifles to mount their nervous pitching horses; then with wild whoops they charged from the draw toward the narrow canyon mouth. Full attention of the

attackers was now drawn to the charging Indians as they swept toward the opening.

For a moment there was a dead silence, as if time was waiting. The youth watched from behind a large boulder.

If half the riders could get through, they could get behind the attackers, he reasoned—if not? His thoughts turned to the white girl. She will be killed if we are all to die.

He was leading the black stallion across a narrow trail up from the draw when more gun fire reverberated through the canyon. The scream of horses sounded above the echoing shots; then all became suddenly quiet again.

That was a plain answer. Now he had to hurry. The girl was so frightened he had to drag her. The shooting had started again, rifle fire was raking the whole canyon.

She began to sob and he slapped her hard across the mouth, then shook her as he glared into her eyes. Defiantly he shook her head, and she understood. Grasping her hand, he ran up over the ridge, pulling her with him, and jumped across to the other side.



Suddenly they were sliding down a long shale bank. Yanking her to her feet, he lifted her astride the shivering stallion, than sprang up behind her, forcing her head down against the animal's mane. He covered her with his own body as they charged out onto the desert, out past the spitting rifles' range. At last he pulled the stallion down to a walk and they rode among the moon shadows and gray brush of the night.

"Where are we going?" She looked up into the now thoughtful features of this wild boy for an answer. He only grunted and reined the stallion about, goading him into a smooth cantor.

"We are going back," the girl cried as they came to the dry lake bed and the sound of shooting could be heard again. Beside a large boulder at the lake shore they dismounted. Pushing her close to the boulder he forced her to sit down.

"Stay," he said simply and gestured that she remain there until he returned. She nodded assent.

Grasping the stallion's mane, he swung to the broad, silky back. With a long look at the girl, he kicked the animal's flanks. Straight off across the lake he rode, on

toward the canyon opening that led to Chimney Rock.

That afternoon they found her asleep by the big boulder. Her father held her close, as she told of her escape and the Indian boy's bravery in saving her life.

"That must have been the rider that I saw riding like the wind up into the canyon this morning about dawn. He was riding a big black horse."

"Didn't you shoot?" asked one of the other men.

"Naw, I figured that if the crazy Indian wanted to die with his people, it was his privilege, so I let him pass."

"Well, where's the big black horse? We didn't find an Indian boy or a big black horse. You must have been dreaming."

"No, he told me to wait, he would return," the girl sobbed.

If you happen to be driving along State 18 and crossing Rabbit Lake at the time, and the moon is high in the zenith, you might take a closer look at a large jack rabbit, or a coyote crossing in the tall shadows, beyond your headlights—it could be a rider and a big black stallion. □

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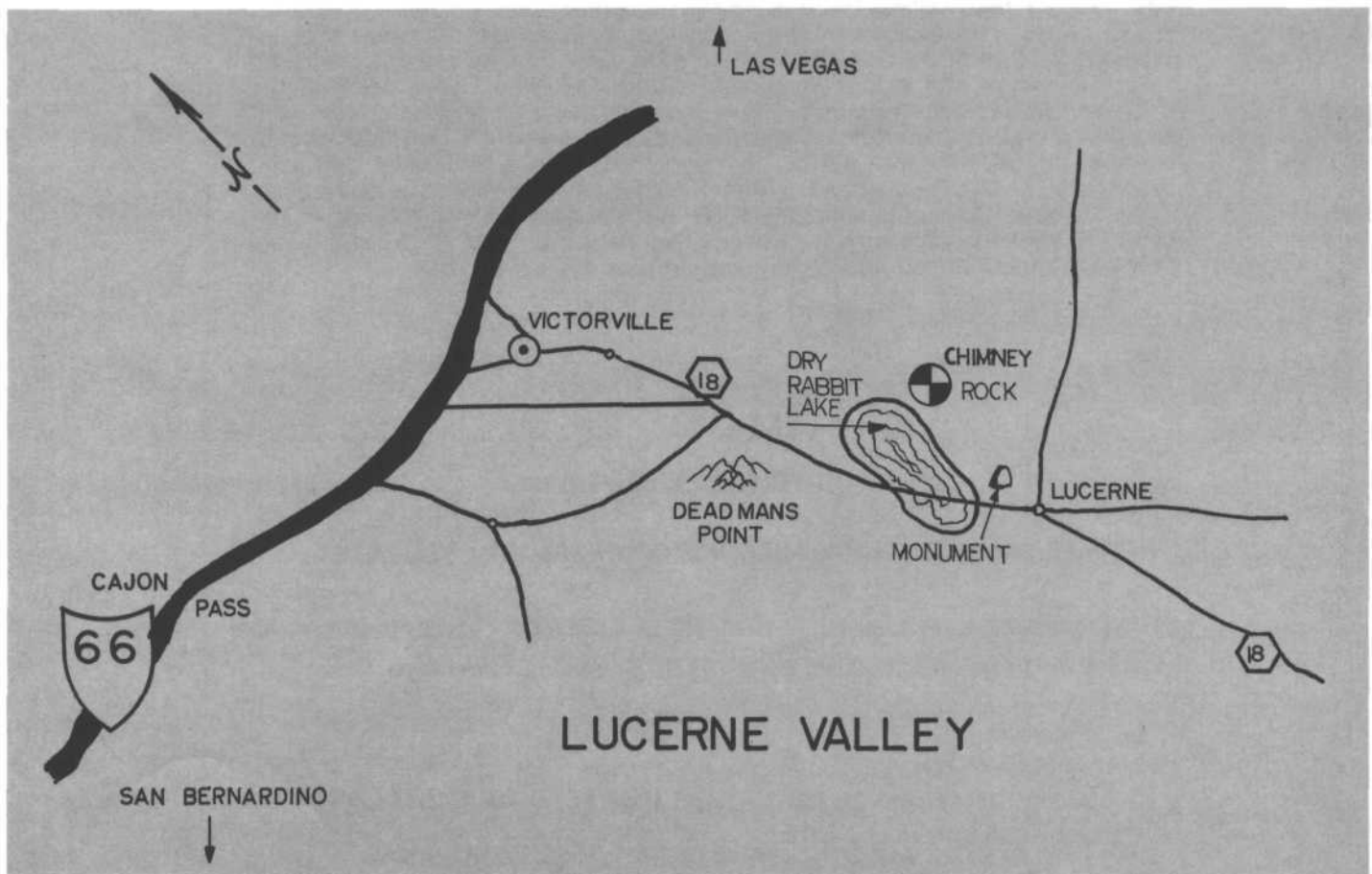
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# The Cagey Cacomistle

by Allen Remington

**O**N A CAMPING trip recently to Darwin Falls, near Death Valley, I was fortunate enough to photograph one of the rarest and most seldom seen animals in the Southwest.

The Cacomistle, or as some call him, the "Ring-tailed" Cat, is a nocturnal animal. He is neither a cat nor a fox, yet he resembles both of them.

This little fellow has a bushy tail which is more than half the total length of his body and marked with eight to ten alternate rings of black and white. He has a pointed, cute little fox-like face with big dark eyes. The Cacomistle weighs from two to three pounds and will have a body length of fifteen inches.

He inhabits the warm, dry climate of the Southwest and Mexico. He prefers broken, rocky country like the Darwin Falls area where there are plenty of small animals on which to feed. He will also eat ripe fruit and berries, when they are in season.

Being mostly a carnivorous animal, the Cacomistle spends the day sleeping curled up in the rocks. He leaves his den in search for food only after the sun has set and then returns before sunrise.

The Cacomistle's kittens are born in May or June and are furless, blind and very helpless. There are usually three or

four in a litter. The adult Cacomistles start feeding their offspring meat in the third week. When two months old, the kittens are out following their mother and learning to hunt for themselves.

For an animal so rarely seen, the Cacomistle has a surprisingly large number of names. Cacomistle is its Aztec name; in Lower California, it is called Babisuri; and it also goes under such names as "Coon-tailed" cat and "Banded-tailed" cat. Prospectors name it "Miners" cat.

The interpretation of its Latin name (*Bassariscus Astutus*) means "Clever Little Fox."

With all of its names, this little animal is not even related to the cat or fox family, but rather to the racoon family.

So, if you are ever in the Darwin Falls area, I suggest you have your camera loaded and ready to go, as I did. The picture you get will be rewarding, especially if he is stealing a loaf of bread as this "Clever Little Fox" was trying to do. □



# EXPLORING THE KEANE

**M**INERS ARE dreamers and Jack Keane was dreaming of finding the coins buried by the Jayhawker party when he stumbled onto ore so rich in gold the mine sold for \$150,000 before it was even developed. Some people even claimed it was the "Lost Breyfogle."

He knew that some of the 49ers had broken away from the wagon train led by Captain Jefferson Hunt and took a short cut through Death Valley. They were in a hurry to reach the gold fields but this tragic decision added two months of misery to their trip. They finally became exhausted from the lack of water, heat and the rough desert they had been traveling through.

At last, in desperation, they burned their wagons to smoke the last of the oxen and left Death Valley by way of Towne's Pass and Jayhawker Canyon. They had decided to take along their gold and silver coins so they would be able to make a new start when they reached the gold fields. However, even this proved to be too much of a load to carry, so they buried it beneath a chalky white cliff marked with Indian paintings. They were sure they would be able to return later and find it. For some unknown reason

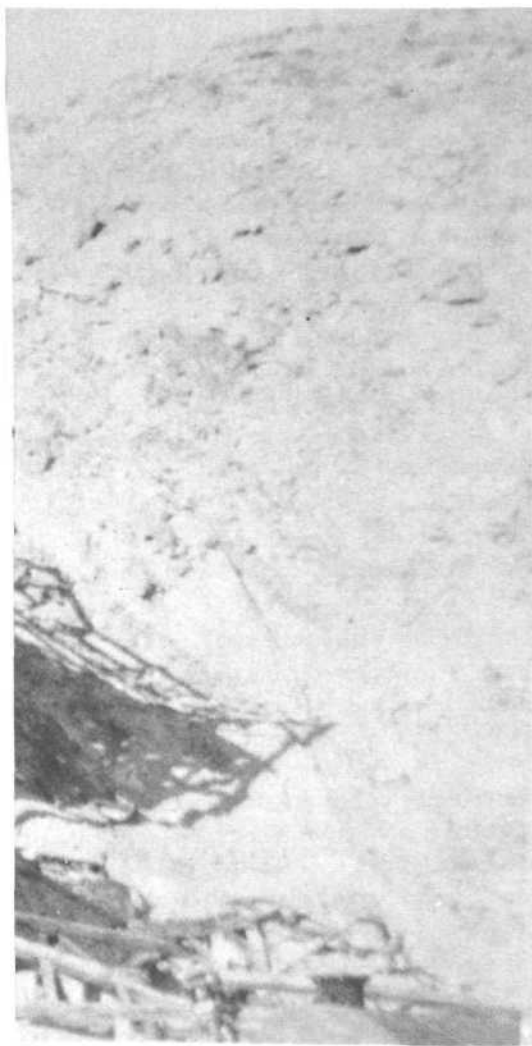






# WONDER MINE

by Betty J. Tucker



they never did, but it was because of this much-told tale that Jack Keane was out searching for his fortune. So in 1903, the Keane Wonder Mine took its place in history along with other accidentally found mines.

By 1907, a 20-stamp mill was crushing 1800 tons of ore a month. It produced

\$1,000,000 worth of gold but that was just enough to pay for itself. Now it is a ghost mine.

To visit this mine turn off the southern Daylight Pass road six miles from its junction with State 190 in Death Valley and you will find a weathered sign proclaiming "Keane Wonder—Jeep road." This rock-strewn road travels high up on an alluvial fan of the Funeral Mountains. Above you can see the chalky white Chloride Cliff.

To the right and down over 1000 feet is the famed Death Valley floor. In the spring the snow-covered Panamints stand as from another world on the opposite side of the valley. It is hard to imagine the intense heat that covers the valley with shimmering regularity every summer.

Take some extra time as you travel this

*Above: The author stands in the midst of ruins of miners' cabins, the area strewn with old stoves, dried-up shoes and bits of pottery. The water storage tanks are in the background. Left: The skeletal remains of the 20-stamp mill which produced \$1,000,000 in days gone by.*

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four-mile trail and examine the rocks along the way. They were once high up in the mountains and were carried down during the heavy rains that come to the valley. Mountain streams and flash floods lose speed abruptly as they near the valley and leave the fans or triangular deposits of rock waste. At the point of the fan are the largest rocks, which were dropped first, and at the outside edges are the smallest ones, which were dropped last. While you are stopped you might even see a whip-tailed lizard bobbing about gathering insects for lunch with his long forked tongue, or the yellow and white primroses growing along the washes.

As you approach the foot of the Funerals you will find the crumbling rock foundations of cabins that were once occupied by the miners. Dried up old shoes, soles curled from the desert heat, lie among rusty square nails, broken bottles and pieces of pottery. There are a lot of old weathered boards lying about. It is strange that so many remain as the lumber was so expensive and hard to

come by it was usually taken from a worked-out mine to a new bonanza.

Climb the steep, but short, path to the stamp mill. Here most of the lumber has been removed but the frame is pretty much intact.

Another path leads back from the mill and up a knoll. From there you get a good view of the pipe that brought the water from the Keane Springs down the mountain to the stamp mill. During the mine's heyday the water pipe had been patrolled so any leak could be taken care of at once. Now it crosses the little knoll in disjointed sections, a silent monument to the water transporting powers of man.

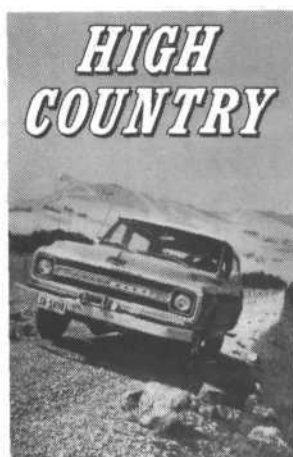
A path leads past several exploratory mines where miners have taken hopeful bites into the mountain. Round a curve and there, perched on the very edge of the cliff, is a one room cabin. It stands on a raft-shaped wooden platform that forms not only the floor but also a porch all the way around the building. The view from the cabin is spectacular, the whole valley on display below. The wind whistles constantly through the empty door and window frames. The walls of the cabin weave back and forth. Pack rats have made cozy homes under the floor boards.

A path behind the cabin leads up to an outhouse that is still useable if you first check for scorpions, spiders and any other type of wildlife that gives you the shivers. Many a modern day homeowner would envy the location and scenic grand desolation of that lonely "two-holer."

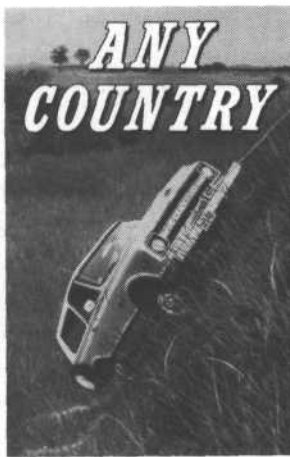
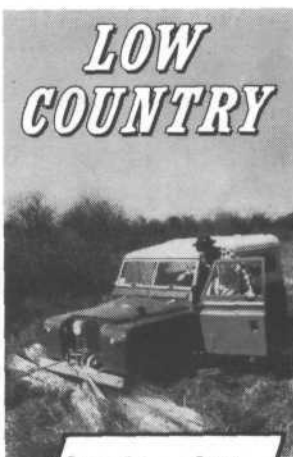
Time permitting, you might climb the trail that leads from the mill site up the tramway for one mile to the mine itself. Do not enter the mine as the ceilings are unsupported and not safe.

A road branching north near the mill leads to mineral springs and pools. There are also a few small mines along this road.

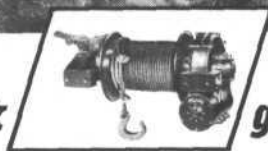
This Death Valley side trip can be made in a passenger car but the road is not maintained and it would be wise to check with the ranger before attempting it. There is room where a camper or trailer could be pulled off the side of the road at the beginning of the trail in case you use trail bikes. A four-wheel-drive or dune buggy would have no trouble. As you know, you must be sure to carry plenty of water any time you travel in the desert. □



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## MONORAIL TO OBLIVION

*Continued from Page 9*

on down to the salt mine. The completed rail bed was not quite 30 miles in length from start to finish, but due to the rough country and numerous other problems they encountered it took the company over two years to complete it.

The monorail's entire construction was an example of man's ingenuity. The wooden trestles were shaped like the letter "A", with the single rail anchored firmly on top. The legs of the trestle were adjustable in order to conform to the contour of the ground, and alleviate the need for grading. Each completed trestle stood between three and four feet high, and water could flow freely through the open legs, thus preventing washouts. The entire structure was reinforced by various methods and materials.

Several types of engines to pull the ore cars were experimented with, and finally tractor engines converted for the purpose proved successful, and the company began, at long last, to ship Epsom salts to their refinery at Wilmington.

The ore cars were hooked into pairs, one hanging over either side of the rail with an equal amount of salt in each, making them perfectly balanced for easy pulling. Each car held five tons of Epsom salts, and the unique little train chugged along its elevated rail at the rate of 15 to 20 miles an hour.

Small troubles plague any mining operation, large or small, and the Epsom Salts Company had had their share, but now, with regular shipments of salt going out they felt the worst years were over, and soon they would start reaping a few profits. But trouble, bigger than ever before, was lying in wait for the little company.

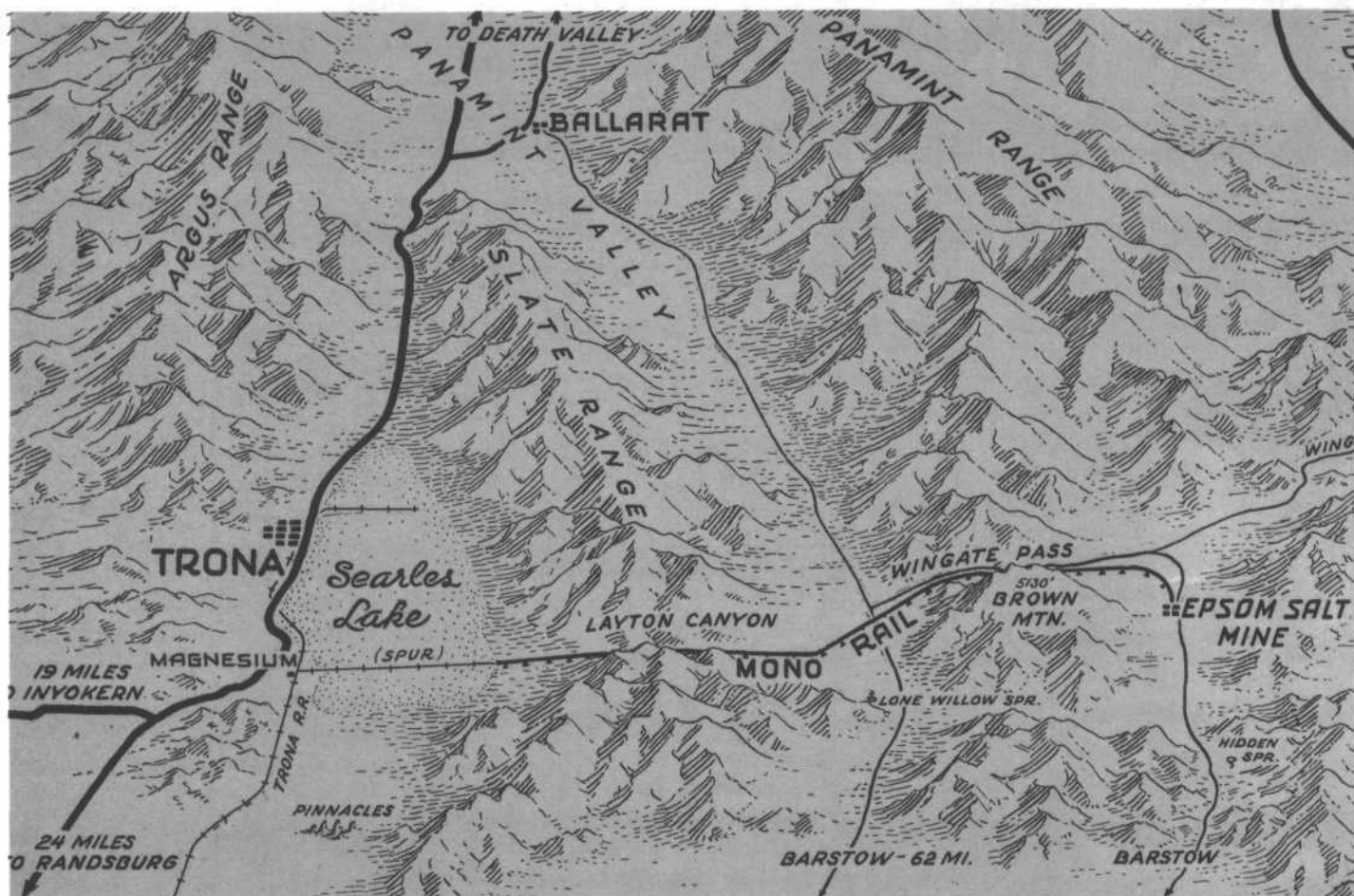
Too much foreign material was getting into the Epsom salts, and the sacks of waste stacking up alongside the refinery in Wilmington was making the city fathers unhappy. They wanted something done about it. Then a summer cloudburst came down on the Slate Range, and water hit the mountains with such force the little trestles, made to accommodate a normal flow, couldn't handle it. Entire sections of the monorail bed were washed away. The Searles Lake which

is usually dry, became covered with a foot or so of rain water, and more sections of the monorail bed sank deep into the softened crust.

By the time the company got around to repairing the washed-out sections of rail bed, other sections had warped and split out of shape from the terrific summer heat. Finally, the company, after several years of hard work—and \$1,000,000 in the hole, admitted defeat and the ill-fated operation was abandoned.

The camp called Epsom City and the unique little train were quick to disappear, but sections of the monorail remained visible for many years. From the old road going through Panamint Valley it could be seen in the distance, and close by the road through Wingate Pass the sturdy little A-shaped trestles trudged steadily along for several miles, holding the solitary rail off the rocky ground.

The trestles were eventually used for firewood by campers in the area, and sometime during the late 1930s scrap dealers salvaged the steel track. Today nothing remains of the elevated monorail, the only railroad track built into the western side of Death Valley. □



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## 15 DEATH VALLEY TRIPS

*Continued from Page 21*

miles. The right fork once contained the Skidoo-Rhyolite telephone line during the early 1900s. If you choose the right fork you will pass a natural arch, a miners camp, and by turning right after 1.2 miles, you will eventually come out on the paved road in Emigrant Canyon.

### Five Overnight Trips

**11** PHINNEY CANYON. If you are one who comes to the desert to find peace and quiet, free from the hustle and bustle of the megalopolis, then Phinney Canyon is for you. This remote corner of Death Valley has never been found, much less "developed." Take U.S. 95 north from Beatty. At a point 1.6 miles north of Springdale, turn left on the dirt road which starts across Sarcobatus Flats. Phinney Canyon is 16.5 miles west. Most vehicles can make it three miles up the canyon, but to reach the crest of the Grapevine Mountains you will probably need four-wheel-drive. The road crosses the ridge and descends a canyon to Doe Spring, a short distance beyond. This is one of the few places in the Monument where you are likely to see deer. Although there is no campground or dependable drinking water here, you can find many nice campsites in the pinyon forest.

**12** JOHNSON CANYON-HUNGRY BILL'S RANCH. Johnson Canyon can easily be explored in one day, but if you are going into the area you might as well take an extra day and visit Hungry Bill's Ranch. Take the Badwater Road six miles south of Furnace Creek Inn, then turn right on the West Side Road, continuing south another 20 miles. Just before reaching Gravel Well a sign points west towards Johnson Canyon. The road climbs the barren bajada and after six miles enters the mouth of Johnson Canyon. Keep right at the fork 2.5 miles up the canyon and you will soon come to a spring and the end of the road. The water is good and you can surely find a place to camp beneath the spreading cottonwoods.

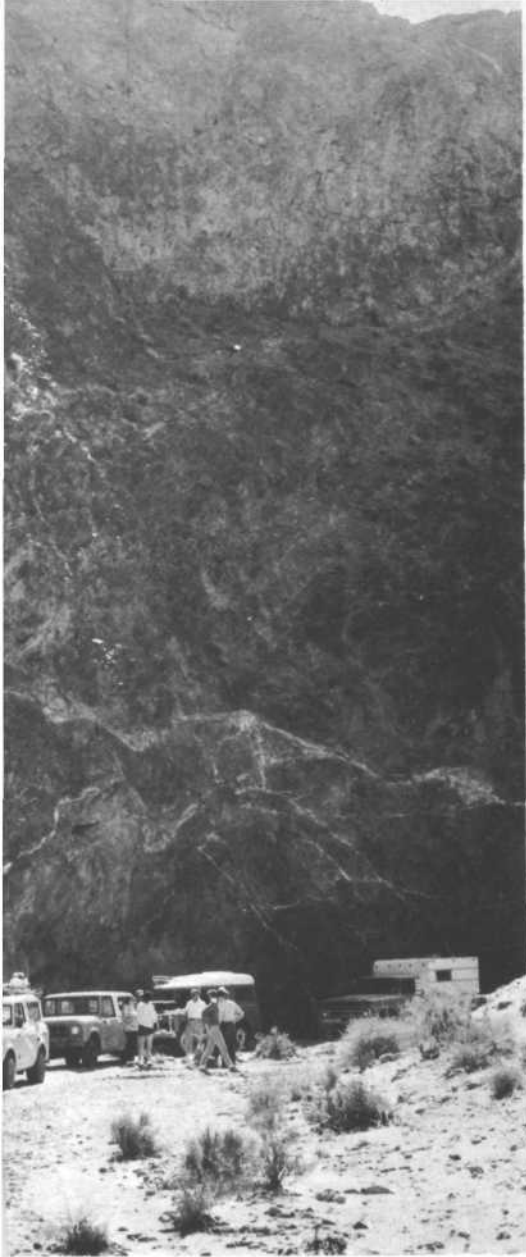
An unmaintained trail goes up the canyon, passes several arrastras, and after two or three miles of relatively easy hiking, reaches the site of Hungry Bill's Ranch. The trail, now faint, goes on to

cross the crest of the Panamints and descends to Panamint City, now a ghost town. In the 1870s some Swiss cultivated the canyon bottom and started growing fruit and vegetables for the hungry miners of Panamint City. When the bank panic of 1875 caused many of the silver mines to close the Swiss farmers abandoned the place. Hungry Bill, a Shoshone chief of immense size and appetite, moved in and filed a homestead. Although the spot has been abandoned for years, the orchards still remain as do an extensive network of stone walls.

**13** BUTTE VALLEY-GOLER WASH. There is so much country to explore in the vicinity of Butte Valley that an overnight trip of at least two days is almost a must. From the Ashford Mill ruins, take the West Side road north, turning west on the Warm Spring Canyon Road. The







*A caravan of rugged four-wheel-drive vehicles stops for a breather in Cottonwood Canyon, one of the most interesting Death Valley side trips.*

**14** **HIDDEN VALLEY-HUNTER MOUNTAIN.** Although readily accessible, much of the northwest corner of the Monument is largely overlooked by most visitors to Death Valley. During the season's peak, only a relatively few brave the 22.5 miles between Ubehebe Crater and the Racetrack, a dry playa known for its skating stones. After coming all that way it seems a shame to turn right around and go back, when numerous back roads lead into the surrounding hills.

Two miles north of Teakettle Junction, a rough road leads east to Quartz Spring. Less than two miles south of Lost Burro Gap roads go west to the Lost Burro Mine and northeast to Rest Spring. A relatively good road continues south through Hidden Valley and Ulinda Flat, crosses Hunter Mountain, and eventually reaches State Route 190. Off this road there are many mines to visit and vistas to view. Water is usually available at Goldbelt Spring and the pinyon forests of seven thousand foot Hunter Mountain offer many secluded campsites.

road is good as far as the talc mining camp at Warm Spring, and from there on it gradually deteriorates and gets rough. Eventually you will reach the head of the canyon and enter Butte Valley, so named for Striped Butte, a prominent geologic landmark. Eleven miles above Warm Spring is Anvil Spring, a dependable source of water, and convenient camping spot.

From Anvil Spring short trips can be taken into the surrounding countryside. To the west is Redlands Canyon where Panamint Russ is said to have found and lost a fabulous vein during a 1925 prospecting trip. To the east is Anvil Spring Canyon, and to the south over Mengel Pass is Goler Wash. Skillful drivers may descend Goler Wash all the way to Panamint Valley. However this is a trip only for the most rugged vehicles with their vital underneath parts protected by skid plates.

**15** **COTTONWOOD-MARBLE CANYONS** March and April are usually delightful times to go into Cottonwood and Marble Canyons. While the journey is slow and requires a four-wheel-drive vehicle, it is not difficult or unusually rough. Across the road from the Stovepipe Wells Hotel, a sign reads "Jeep Road, Cottonwood Canyon, Marble Canyon." Follow the road west, turning right at the fork 5.2 miles from the Village. Within three miles you will enter the mouth of Cottonwood Canyon. The road may disappear, but continue up the wash. A short distance beyond, an old sign points west towards Marble Canyon, an interesting but dead end side trip. By keeping to the left you can go up the canyon another 8.3 miles. At the roads end you will find a cottonwood-lined stream, somewhat of an oddity for Death Valley. Wildlife abounds here and burros are frequently seen, too. Cottonwood Canyon is one of the more interesting back country trips in Death Valley. □

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## News and Views From Other Publications

On an old ranch near Truckee, California appears the following notice: NOTIS! Trespassers will B percecuted to the full extent of 2 mungrel dogs which neve was over sochible to strangers and one dubble brl shot gun which aint loded with sofa pillers. Dam if I aint gitten tired of this hell raising on my place. B. Griscom—Back Country Manners by Sally Lindman from the Prospectors' Club of Southern California *Treasure News*.

Sally Lindman then continues her article pointing out that digging, collecting or traveling over private property is a MUST. She stated that evidently someone left Mr. Griscom's gate open and that he found his cattle gone. We think Mr. Griscom's notice is NOT FUNNY. We printed it because DESERT MAGAZINE predicts that if back country travelers do not start a definite program of cooperation to control those who violate other's property, within a few years there will be very few acres of back country, either public or private, for us to take our families for a weekend of recreation. If you think we are alarmists, read the following article from the Bureau of Land Management:

### ADVISORY COUNCIL SEEKS ANSWERS TO OFF-ROAD VEHICLE PROBLEMS

The problems of off-road vehicles on public land in California were reviewed at a meeting in Sacramento August 13 by the Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Council to the Bureau of Land Management in this state. The 15-member council, representing such diverse interests as the Sierra Club, the Cattlemen's Assn., and the American Motorcycle Assn., is conducting a series of meetings to consider the needs and problems of recreationists who drive motorcycles, dune buggies, and 4-wheel drive vehicles off the roads and highways across the public lands.

"The tremendous growth of off-road vehicles use in California has posed serious prolems on the public lands," pointed out Howard Harris, a rancher from Hollister representing the Calif. Farm

Bureau Federation. Mr. Harris is Chairman of the Council. "Hundreds of thousands of these vehicles can be found on public lands each weekend and they are competing for space with each other and with other public land users. They are also making a substantial impact on the natural resources of the land."

Methods of managing off-road vehicle use on the 16 million acres of public land administered by the BLM in California are being analyzed by the Council.

"Despite the complete cross-section of public viewpoints that are represented on the Council, we have already reached substantial agreement on the job we are doing," stated Harris. "We all recognize off-road vehicle use of the public land as a legitimate form of outdoor recreation enjoyed by Californians of all ages and walks of life," he said. "We also recognize the urgent need for some sound methods of managing off-road vehicle use so that people will continue to be able to enjoy this kind of recreation."

The Council members pointed out that the population in California is expected to double in the next 30 years and that the rate of growth of off-road vehicle use is even faster—but there will be no more land available. "This is why the Bureau of Land Management has asked us to address ourselves to this problem now," Harris explained.

In the coming months, the Council members will be working on proposals for specific management procedures to cover off-road vehicle use and will take these up at the next Council meeting in November. The Council will be making its recommendations to the State Director of the Bureau of Land Management, J. R. Penny.

The scourge of the litterbugs will get worse each summer, judging by recent estimates that put the production of 12 ounce containers by 1982 at a possible 900 million gross. Since a gross is 12 dozen, it is not hard to figure out what the land will look like in the summer of 1985, if littering continues uncurbed—

## Calendar of Western Events

*Information on Western Events must be received at DESERT two months prior to their scheduled date.*

OCTOBER 25 & 26, GOLDEN GATE GEM AND MINERAL SHOW, sponsored by Daly City Rockhounds, War Memorial Community Center, 6655 Mission Street, Daly City, Calif. Write Harriet Lee, P. O. Box 596, Daly City, Calif.

NOVEMBER 1 & 2, MINERAL SHOW sponsored by the Mineralogical Society of Southern California in co-operation with the Geology Club of Pasadena City College, 1570 East Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, Calif. Write Milton Wise, 1955 Devon Rd., Pasadena.

NOVEMBER 8 & 9, THIRD ANNUAL RIVER GEMBOREE sponsored by the Silvery Colorado River Rock Club, Riviera Club House, 5 miles south of Bullhead City, Arizona. Admission free.

NOVEMBER 8 & 9, 13TH ANNUAL GEM AND MINERAL SHOW of the Indian Wells Gem and Mineral Society, China Lake Community Center, China Lake, Calif. Admission free.

NOVEMBER 9, 'SUCCULENT PLANT FAMILIES' Slide Show sponsored by the Cactus and Succulent Society of Americas, Lecture Hall 144, California State College, Los Angeles, Calif, 1:00 P.M. Admission free.

NOVEMBER 27-30, 4 X 4 AND DUNES BUGGY News National Sand Championships. Dumont Dunes (east of Baker, Calif.).

NOVEMBER 27-30, FOURTH ANNUAL ROCKHOUND ROUND-UP sponsored by the Council of San Diego Gem and Mineral Societies, Walker's Gold Rock Ranch (north of Ogilby, Calif.) Field trips for agate, geodes, petrified wood, etc., ghost town trip to Tumco, auctions, evening campfires, tall-tale contests, Unlimited campsites. Admission free.

the number of bottles, cans, etc., will be 129,600,000,000.—From Bureau of Land Management *News Beat*.

And along the same line the following is reported by the Department of the Interior in a news release: "In 1968, collection of discarded cans, bottles, cartons, and other litter in the national parks cost taxpayers approximately \$1,750,000. In addition, the extent to which litter affects the park wildlife is not known. There are some indications that animals have become ill or died as a result of eating plastic or foil wrappings or other refuse.



## TRIP TO RAINBOW BASIN

*Continued from Page 11*

entrance to the campground, the Bureau of Land Management refers to the area as the Calico Resource Conservation area. It extends about 38 miles in an east-west direction and varies from about five miles to 13 miles in width. According to the brochure, the area embraces archeological, geological and recreational potential. The visitor might consider this an understatement. The area is truly unique in all three aspects.

It is now believed, as a result of recent excavations near Coyote Dry Lake, that the first man on the North American continent may have settled in this region. Scientists are even now probing deeper and deeper into archeological background of this area.

The "Dig," as it has become known, near the eastern boundaries of the Conservation area, is open to visitors.

Evidence of man's existence here has been uncovered dating back 50,000 years. Prior to this discovery, the oldest evidence of man living in North America was less than 40,000 years old.

The visitor is permitted to walk within viewing distance of the dig. They will see in the deep pits the working of scientists who are not only looking for additional evidence of man, but also marking off the various layers of geological formation. (See Desert, Dec. '68.)

A person can spend weeks touring this area and still not have seen it all. From the spectacular painted mountains to Fossil Canyon and throughout the archeological wonders, a visitor can keep absorbed for days.

Geologically, the story of this area began "once upon a time," but every era has added another chapter. From the first violent formation of the land to the arrival of man, the story unfolds, then begins anew as more men came and left their mark upon the earth.

The highlights of the Conservation area can be visited during a weekend, starting Saturday morning at Rainbow Basin and gradually working east. As the tour is in progress, the visitor's impressions quickly change from awe to disbelief. Here, in a few short miles, is the incredible story of nature at work, slow, meticulous and complete. □

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## NEW FIBERGLASS ALASKAN TELESCOPIC CAMPER

After more than three years of extensive engineering, testing and designing by aeronautical engineers, Alaskan Camper has unveiled its all new 1970 "F. G." camper line. The new "space age" models unite the time-tested hydraulic system with new advanced techniques of molded fiberglass which makes a stronger, yet much lighter, body.

R. D. "Don" Hall, owner of Alaskan Camper Sales, says the new models have a lower center of gravity and are the only raising and lowering campers which can be driven in any position, either up or down. The three new models are the 8-foot, 10-foot and 10-foot Special. For information write to Alaskan Campers Sales, Inc. 9847 Glenoaks Blvd., Sun Valley (San Fernando Valley) California 91352.



The 8-foot model on left shows Alaskan Camper raised and the 10-foot on right, lowered. The contour molded fiberglass is reinforced with steel and foamed in place for insulation. Water baffle on all windows keep out inclement weather.



Interior of 10-foot model shows portion of 12-piece Vision-Ventilation system. There is wall-to-wall carpeting, three interior lights, vinyl-backed, fabric window shades, stove, icebox, butane gas, and many other features.

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"AMERICAN BOTTLES, Old and New," by Walbridge, illustrated 1920 reprint, \$3.95. "Wonders of Glass & Bottle Making," by Sauzay, 256pp 1871 reprint, illustrated, \$5.50. Postpaid. Frontier Books, Fort Davis, Texas 79734.

OUT-OF-PRINT books at lowest prices! You name it—we find it! Western Americana, desert and Indian books a specialty. Send us your wants. No obligation. International Bookfinders, Box 3003-D, Beverly Hills, Calif.

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WILD & WOOLY WEST books: 30# Rails on narrow gauge trains, Mark Twain's Jumping Frog, Service's Yukon Poems, Uncle Jim's Book of Pancakes, Matthews' Navajo Weavers & Silversmiths, Faulk's Simple Methods of Mining Gold, \$1 each postpaid. Cushing's Adventures in Zuni, Engler's Oliver Perry Wiggins, \$2 each. All profusely illustrated. Send stamp for catalog of Western Books. Filter Press, Box 5D, Palmer Lake, Colorado 80133.

"SONNETT'S COMPLETE GUIDE to Fabulous Las Vegas," 187 pages where to stay, go, eat, have fun. \$2.00 plus 25¢ postage and handling. McAllister's International, 1111 Las Vegas Blvd., South, Suite 317D, Las Vegas, Nevada 89104.

NEVADA TREASURE Hunters Ghost Town Guide. Large folded map. 800 place name glossary. Railroads, towns, camps, camel trail. \$1.50. Theron Fox, 1296-C Yosemite, San Jose 26, California.

RIVER OF GOLD, the richest treasure of them all. A new book "Treasure Travels" contains all new photos, maps and other valuable information on California's most fabulous treasure. \$3 postpaid. Gedco Publishing Co., Box 67, Bellflower, Calif. 90706.

"DEAD MEN DO Tell Tales" By Lake Erie Schaefer. Facts about Frank Fish's mysterious death, still unexplained. Sequel to "Buried Treasure & Lost Mines" the Treasure Hunters manual. \$3 postpaid. L. Erie Schaefer, 14728 Peyton Drive, Chino, Calif. 91710.

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TRUE WEST, Frontier Times, Real West, True Western Adventures magazines. Back issues for sale. Charles Crum, 4322 Victor Street, Jacksonville, Fla. 32207.

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## • BOOKS - MAGAZINES

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ARIZONA TREASURE Hunters Ghost Town Guide. Large folded map 1881, small early map. 1200 place name glossary, mines, camps. Indian reservations, etc. \$1.50. Theron Fox, 1296-E Yosemite, San Jose, California.

SURVIVAL BOOKS! Guerrilla Warfare, Wilderness Living, Medical, Guns, Self Defense, Nature. Books—Vital, Fascinating, Extraordinary; Catalog free. Adobe Hacienda, Route 3, Box 517A, Glendale, Arizona 85301.

GUIDE TO MEXICO'S gems and minerals: localities, mines, maps, directions, contacts. English-Spanish glossary, too. \$2.00 postpaid. Gemac, Mentone, Calif. 92359.

FREE 128 page catalog on detectors, books and maps. General Electronic Detection Co., 16238 Lakewood Blvd., Bellflower, Calif. 90706.

LOST DESERT GOLD, legendary and geological history of the southern California desert, with photos and maps to pinpoint locations. \$2.50 postpaid. Gedco Publishing Co., Box 67, Bellflower, Calif. 90706.

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DEADLINE FOR CLASSIFIED ADS IS 10TH OF SECOND MONTH PRECEDING COVER DATE.

## • GEMS

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## • MAPS

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# Woman's Viewpoint



November is the month to be thankful and I am especially thankful for the material nature has provided westerners to decorate with. I marvel at dry yucca torches, gold-lined milk weed pods, and orange pyracantha berries. How appropriate it would be if every western woman made her Thanksgiving centerpiece from the pods, leaves, berries, or seeds that grow in her locality. It could be a low basket filled with acorns, or gold candles on a bed of magnolia leaves, or drift wood with ivy twined around it. We western women are indeed blessed with an infinite variety of nature's ornaments.

In the autumn I can't resist the colorful leaves. Yet I never feel right picking a bouquet because they curl and fall off in a few days. This year I satisfied my urge to have fall leaves by glueing them on a waste basket. I pressed leaves of every color and shape, between newspaper weighed down with books. By pressing the leaves for only a day or two they were flat but still pliable. After overlapping them so no metal showed, I covered them with a coat of plastic resin. Now the leaves can be enjoyed all year.

Green foliage can be preserved in three dimension by soaking the stems in a solution of one-third glycerin and two-thirds water. Crush the basal two inches of the stems and let the stems stand in the solution for from two days to two weeks depending on the foliage. (After picking the foliage put it into the solution immediately, not plain water first.) Some of the greenery will change colors. The

brittle green magnolia leaves turn a rich leathery brown after two weeks. Ivy will be bright green in four days and be ready to use in many decorations.

To preserve leaves by pressing them, be sure to use a porous paper such as tissue or newspaper. The slick paper of most magazines and catalogs will not absorb moisture fast enough and the leaves may fade or mildew.

Leaves are beautiful to use in decorating but seeds and pods are more fun. Seed craft can be enjoyed by anyone from three to ninety-three. The fun begins with collecting and ends in a finished product of originality that you can enjoy forever.

Traveling is twice the fun when you collect seeds and pods along the way. The material you bring home and use is the best souvenir you can have of vacations. I put the collected material into match boxes, cottage cheese cartons, and shoe



*Autumn leaves make an interesting cover-up for an ordinary waste-basket.*

boxes depending on the size. Punch holes in the sides to assure good ventilation, then label the containers with the date collected, name of the plant, and the area it came from.

One year I collected a box full of plump brown acorns. I put them in a compote bowl on the kitchen table. A few days later we were horrified to find tiny worms crawling out of the acorns onto the table. After that I've put moth balls in the containers or heated them in the oven to kill any eggs or larvae.

Seeds and pods can be used for picture mosaics. Hobby stores sell rattan outlines of fish, butterflys, trees, etc. By putting a cardboard back on the form, they can be

filled with seeds. I noticed another idea for using seeds in a friend's house. She covered an old duck decoy with seeds; they were layered to look like feathers. The contrasting shades and textures certainly made a unique conversation piece.

Bring a little of our western autumn into your home. How about a bouquet of cattails, a basket filled with gourds, or a tray decorated with leaves. Write and tell us how it turned out.

Don't miss the December issue! Woman's Viewpoint will have Christmas decorations and gift suggestions using nature's gifts. With inflation nabbing at our pockets, ideas for cutting Christmas expenses will be welcome. And don't you have a warm feeling toward the person who values your friendship enough to make you a gift? If you have any favorite recipes, decoration ideas, or traditions, be sure and share them with us. Let's help our feature grow!

Answer:

1. Several months ago a reader asked for curtain ideas for campers and trailers. I have been snooping ever since. Two important factors to consider when you select a fabric are sun fading and ease in opening and closing. Materials with a white background shows fading least. Most curtains have to be manually opened and closed. (Often by grubby little hands.) So the material should be sturdy and washable.

My neighbor has a tiny mobile home with only one window along the back. She hung two curtain rods. The underneath rod carries a gathered cotton fabric with a white background and orange, yellow and green flowers. The outside rod is covered with an ungathered green felt scalloped valance. Yellow tassels swing from each scallop.

My sister made some new curtains for her camper from terrycloth. The red, white and pink swirled print looks good from the inside and the outside of their red pickup and camper. She made the usual hemmed type curtain with a rod through the top hem but added two rows of pre-washed red fringe along the bottom. The fabric is ideal; it can stand lots of washing and needs no ironing.

*JoAnn A. Robinson*



## Message to Mr. Pegleg . . .

I have done considerable work on ancient channels throughout California. Last fall, coming back from Arizona on U.S. 80 to San Diego I picked up two ancient channels west of Yuma with a Geoscope; one 20 miles west of Yuma, the other west of Placer City.

Since that time I built a dune buggy and went back to check this channel out. I traced this channel from west of Placer City, east of Superstition Mountain, north to San Felipe Creek. At that point there is only 20 to 40 feet of overburden and from there into the Badlands northwest through Borrego Sink into Coyote Canyon, north through San Rosa Mountain into Cottonwood Mountain.

I checked this channel out for several miles. It is all broken up from San Felipe Creek through Badlands, through Borrego Sink to Coyote Mountain and ancient gravel is exposed. If you picked up nuggets in this area you were on the ancient channel. The nuggets would be scattered out over a wide area, not like where the channel is in place. This country has been pushed up and turned over so it would be possible to pick up black nuggets where hills have raised up and ground has eroded off and left gravel and nuggets exposed. I don't think this channel would be profitable to work; only where the channel is in place.

I have found several places where a drift could be driven into the channel or a shaft sunken in from 150 to 200 feet underground and has water in some places.

I have checked this channel with a Geoscope and it is responsive to the MuMeson wave and as every element rebounds a MuMeson wave of its own particular length, each and every element can be detected. However, the quantity of this particular element cannot be determined from these rays, other than a great mass will likewise produce stronger and more volume of emission than a small mass. As there is no insulation for these rays the Geoscope will work from an automobile, airplane, train or any means of travel. These PiMeson waves travel vertically from a channel or ore body.

If this is the area where you found your black nuggets will you please reply?

GILBERT O. FRENCH,  
Oroville, Calif.

## A Query on Long-life Rations . . .

A few months ago I read about a packaged food which is very comparable to the Army "C" rations. This product is supposed to have a shelf-life of thirty years. Also, it has been approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.

I would like to know where this product can be purchased. If you have not heard of this, perhaps one of Desert's readers would be able to help.

GENE WOOTEN,  
Las Vegas, Nevada.

# Letters to the Editor

Letters requesting answers must include  
stamped self-addressed envelope.

## A Newsstand Reader Writes . . .

Much of the pleasure of DESERT is the looking for and finding on the magazine rack at the local super-market. Watching for and finding a new edition adds fun and interest to an otherwise just necessary chore. And the glancing at the beautiful pictures and reading snatches of the articles make the standing in line seem not so long and tiresome. I enjoy looking for my copy of DESERT.

Would like to add—have loaned my copies to several friends, ill or otherwise kept at home, and they have a wonderful gift of beauty. My copies are kept and looked at over and over—they never grow old.

MRS. FLORENCE SARE,

## HELP Needs Your Help . . .

Have you ever seen H.E.L.P.?

The Bear Gulch Rock Club adopted this as a club project. Each member of the Club carries a gunny sack in his vehicle and each and every time a trip is made a gunny sack of debris is picked up by each member. Their slogan is: "Help Eliminate Litter, Please" . . . originated by their ex-president, and this is exactly what our club is doing. Woe betide the member who does not fill his sack!

To belong to H.E.L.P. you need not be a rockhound, there are no dues, no bylaws, no meetings, no nothing—but you do have to have a desire to see cleaner highways and byways in our beautiful state, a gunny sack and about six minutes of your trip time.

Perhaps you have noticed a caravan of campers stopped along the highway, everyone out with a gunny sack picking up bottles, cans, papers, rags; litter left by the careless and thoughtless, people who have no eyes for beauty, nor care for their fellow man.

I have noticed as the cars were whizzing by many eyes turned our way wondering what and why?, but none ever stopped to ask or join in. Next time you see a group of people recreating beauty for you, stop your car, grab your sack and enjoy yourself. It will give you a great sense of satisfaction. Try it and see.

MRS. R. F. LAUX,  
San Diego, Calif.

## Longtime Reader Reminisces . . .

I really enjoy Al Pearce's article in the June '69 issue, "Fifty Miles of Fury," and his reference to Dos Cabezas Springs. Since I'm a third generation of the McCains who ran cattle and sheep all through that country, I'm really familiar with the landmarks.

The little cabin you have pictured on pages 36-37 was built by my father, Darrell McCain in 1930. We had sheep there and needed a place out of the wind to cook, eat and spend the evening. We used it for several winters. My grandfather, Robert L. McCain and Grandmother, Nancy, spent the winter there in 1932. Grandmother often said that was one of the happiest years of her life.

We have been subscribers to Desert Magazine for more than 30 years.

JACK MCCAIN GRAVES,  
El Cajon, Calif.

## Litter Letter from a Little Lady . . .

I am 13 years of age, and I think it is awful how people throw their cans all over. In your article you were speaking of the Reynolds Company and how they were offering a half-cent for cans. There is one in Los Angeles at 6446 East Washington Blvd. We went out to the mountains last week and picked up around 31 cans within a half-hour. Thank you for listening.

DENISE PANGERSIS,  
Anaheim, California.

*Editor's Note: For the past 31 years DESERT Magazine has been a leader in the field of conservation and preservation. As more and more people travel through the back country, littering becomes more acute—and more disgraceful. We MUST educate the newcomers to everyone can enjoy Nature. Thank you, Denise, for speaking out and joining us in our campaign for cleanliness.*

## Tick Talk . . .

About that "Where's Tick Canyon" business (Letters to the Editor, Aug. '69), I read the story in the June issue and as I mumbled, "Tick Canyon, Tick Canyon," my wife, Katie, in all innocence asked, "Who is Tick Canyon?"

MIKE GIESHER,  
Boynton Beach, Florida.

## Out Peaked . . .

In your August issue of Desert, Elizabeth Beebe in her article *New California High Sierra Campsites* states that Mt. Whitney is the highest peak in the United States. What about Mt. McKinley? Isn't that mountain in the U.S.?

MARY PAGE,  
Brea, California.

*Editor's Note: The tallest point in the Northern Hemisphere, Mt. McKinley rises 20,320 feet into the Alaskan sky and overshadows California's Mt. Whitney by 5824 feet—and Alaska is now in the United States.*

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